

LIFE STORY OF W. A. SHEAFFER

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Walter A. Sheaffer was born in Bloomfield, Davis County, Iowa, on July 27, 1867. His father, Jacob R. Sheaffer, moved to Bloomfield from Ottumwa, Iowa, after returning from California Gulch in 1854 and entered the jewelry business at that time in Bloomfield, which was only a small town of several hundred people. He was of Holland-Dutch ancestry and his people came from Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. On _____ he married Anna Eliza Walton. There were five children born to this union, of which only two remain: Mrs. E. T. Matthews of Grand Junction Colorado, and W. A. Sheaffer.

Jacob R. Sheaffer in the early days of Davis County was a very successful merchant and acquired considerable means and was also very successful in a local insurance company. But through the efforts of outsiders, they were induced to unite with the Great Western Insurance Company of Chicago. In 1871 when the Chicago Fire occurred, it wiped out all their resources and made them doubly liable. Then the panic of 1873 came and forced him to dispose of his jewelry store and everything else he had in order to pay his debts in full, which he did. He later, in 1880, borrowed money to start in the jewelry business again.

These circumstances made it necessary for me to begin work very early in life and I did not completely finish high school. My first job, as a devil in a printing office, paid me one dollar a week. From there, when I was about twelve years of age, I entered a grocery store, earning \$7.20 a month for the summer vacation. Out of the \$21.60 earned during the summer, I saved \$19.00 to buy my clothes for the next winter.

The next summer I started a peanut stand for myself and made in the neighborhood of \$75.00 a month from it. Having piled up this considerable amount of money, it was my first experience in prosperity. I spent money rather freely the next winter, only to find that my money did not last me through the winter. This was a lesson I never forgot. In the future after I had this experience, I always managed to save and have something ahead, even if it was ever so small.

Father had taken a young nephew, who was an orphan boy, into the jewelry store to help manage the business. Therefore, I sought a job in Centerville, Iowa, and stayed there about a year or more, at which time I went and worked for an uncle in Unionville, Missouri, and left father and the nephew to run the business.

In 1888, as the jewelry business was not succeeding, father sent for me and asked me to come home to help him bring the business out of debt. We made a survey of our sales. At this time or at sometime during this period, Montgomery Ward and Sears Roebuck first brought out their catalogs. We kept a sales book which showed the cost and selling price of every article we sold. In the Sears Roebuck and Montgomery Ward catalogs the items which affected our business the most were a 7 jewel Elgin watch, a 15 jewel Walton watch, a Seth Thomas clock, a set of 1847 Rogers knives and forks, and a wedding ring. We found that their prices on these items were as low as we could buy them for and they constituted about 70% of our sales. *Walther*

As Davis County had only sixteen thousand people in it; as the town of Bloomfield at this time had a population of only two thousand people who were mostly all retired farmers; as there were more catalogs in the homes than bibles (for every home contained one bible but had two catalogs); and as there were in the two catalogs a 7 jewel Elgin watch priced at \$4.25 which cost us \$4.25 in the silverine case, a 15 jewel Walton watch priced at \$5.25 which cost us \$5.25, and a set of Rogers knives and forks priced at \$3.25 which actually cost us \$3.25, it was rather a dismal picture and our chances of success seemed to be very slim. *Walther*

It was just at that time that the Hamilton Watch Company came out with a splendid line of watches which they did not sell to the mail order houses. We took the Hamilton 17 jewel watches and we marked them \$14.00 and \$16.00 in a silverine case and on up to \$45.00 in gold-filled cases. But we had to do something to meet the mail order prices; so, the 7 jewel Elgin watch which cost us \$4.25 we marked \$3.95, or 30 cents below cost; the 15 jewel Walton watch which cost us \$5.25 we marked \$4.95, or 30 cents below cost; and the set of 1847 Rogers knives and forks which cost us \$3.25 we marked \$2.95. *Walther*

We then had Holmes and Edwards make us a nickel-silver knife and fork silver plated, which would not turn black on the edges like a silver knife plated on steel. We sold this knife and fork for \$5.00, a price at which we could make a fair profit. I believe it was among the first nickel-silver knives silver plated on the market. But as they were much better and would wear much better than a silver knife plated on steel, we were giving the customer his money's worth.

We took and thumbed down the pages of watches in the Sears Roebuck and the Montgomery Ward catalogs and advertised that we undersold the mail order houses. We instructed the salespeople in the store not to urge the better watch on the customer, but to answer his questions thoroughly and honestly and it would create a desire in the customer's mind for the better watch. These Hamilton watches were regulated very fine, as we saw that they were all running perfectly.

We then put ten of them in a Dennison tray holding 12 watches. The two front center spaces we left for the \$3.95 and the \$4.95 Elgin and Walton watches. We tried to use at that time the profit-sharing plan and psychology in selling. We were sure in presenting these \$14 and \$16 Hamilton watches that they would be the best for the customer and it would be the best for the store to sell.

Waltham

When a young farmer would come in and ask to see one of the \$3.95 watches, we never took the \$3.95 watch out of the case and laid it on the plush pad on the showcase. Instead, we took out the tray of 12 watches and then took the watch he called for out of the tray and then laid it on the plush pad in front of it. This psychology made either the sale of a better watch or the loss of it; for if we had adopted the plan of taking the \$3.95 watch out of the case and laying it on the tray and then reached down in the case and got a \$14 watch out which hadn't been called for, then even the farmer boy would say to himself: "He expects to sell me the \$14 watch, but I will show him that he won't." But by reaching down and taking out the tray of 12 watches and taking the \$3.95 watch out and laying it on the pad, we left the other 11 watches right there for him to look at. Doing this helped to create a desire for the better watches and made it much easier to make the sale of the higher-priced watch. The salespeople in the store received extra remuneration whenever they sold the higher-priced watch that we made a profit on and which was better for the customer to buy.

We never allowed the salespeople to take the Hamilton watch out of the tray nor to present it to the customer until the customer first asked about it. Generally the customer would look at the \$3.95 watch and then he would ask about the \$4.95 watch. Pretty soon in all cases he would pick up one of the nicer \$14 or \$16 Hamilton watches and ask about it. When he was told the price, I never saw one of them hold the watch but drop it and put it back into the tray and say it was too high. The answer would be: "It might be the cheapest in the long run." Then we would go back to the \$3.95 watch and start just as though we expected to sell that watch to the customer.

We would open the case and show the customer the inside movement and explain it to him. Then he would ask: "How long do you guarantee this watch?" We would tell him: "One year." He would say: "How long do you guarantee the \$4.95 watch?" The answer would be: "One year." Then he would say: "How long do you guarantee the Hamilton watch?" We told him: "Three years." The customer would ask: "Why do you guarantee the Hamilton watch three years and guarantee these other watches only one year?" We said: Because the guarantee has to be based on the amount of trouble that we go to on the watch. We don't have to go to as much trouble on the Hamilton watch in three years as we do on the 7 and 15 jewel watches in one year." The question then would be: "What is the difference between the watches?" That was, of course, the question we wanted him to ask, for it gave us an opportunity to answer and explain the difference between the watches.

We would explain that in the 7 jewel there was no patented pinion. In those days the cheapest watches had none and if the main spring broke it would likely break the cogs in the wheels and injure the watch. But the 17 jewel watch had a patented pinion and if the main spring broke, the pinion unscrewed and released the strain on the cogs and did not injure the watch. We explained that on the 17 jewel watch the jewels were in a setting and if a jewel got broken, by loosening a couple of screws it could be pushed out and a new one inserted without injury to the watch. In the 15 jewel watch the jewels were in a flange and the flange might be injured when replacing the jewels. Also, the 17 jewel watch had a breguet hair spring.

After presenting these convincing arguments to the customer, we generally did sell the \$14 or the \$16 watch instead of the \$3.95 or the \$4.95 watch. We had not urged the higher-priced watch on the customer, but had simply answered his questions. We did not stop here, as we knew that this 17 jewel watch would either bring us more sales by being a perfect time-keeper and by being thoroughly regulated or would lose us a sale.

We said to the young man after he had bought one of these Hamilton watches: "Now, your family will object when you go home at your having paid this much for a watch." He said: "Yes, I will catch the devil when I go home." We asked: "Your father has one of the cheaper watches?" "Yes." Then we gave him a little case opener with a shield on it so that he could not injure the movement in opening the case.

We told him when he got home to wait until dinner time when the family were all together before he said anything about the watch. When the family began to criticize him for purchasing this watch, we told him to take out his watch and lay it on the table and then take his father's watch and set it with the watch he had just bought at the jeweler's, telling his father that the watch had been set and thoroughly regulated at the store. Then he was to open his watch and his father's watch and explain to the family, as we had explained to him at the store, all the differences between these two watches.

Then we asked him the first time he and his father came to town to come into the store and see how their watches were running. As a rule, in two or three weeks the father and son would come into the store and pull out their watches to compare time. We never needed to ask any questions because in every case the father would be frowning and the boy would be all smiles. Then when we stepped up to greet them, we found that the father's watch was many minutes off from the correct time and the boy's watch would be right on the correct time. As a rule, it wouldn't be many months before the father would come into the store to buy himself one of these better time keepers - often in a gold-filled case.

By taking care in selecting a fine watch for the customer to buy and regulating it thoroughly so that it would keep perfect time, and by taking the pains to follow through and explain to the boy so that he could be a salesman for us with the rest of his family, allowed us to fill this small county full of these fine watches while we were offering cheap 7 and 15 jewel watches at 30 cents below cost, or less than the catalog houses were offering them for. Thus, by first selecting every item we sold that was best for the customer to buy and then charging a fair profit for it, we were enabled to pay off the mortgage on the store and get our business in better shape.

In February 1888 I married Nellie Davis. To this union were born two children, both of whom are now living: C. R. Sheaffer, who is now President of the W. A. Sheaffer Pen Company; and Clementine Waldron, whose husband is vice president and general sales manager of the W. A. Sheaffer Pen Company.

After the marriage in 1888, I found that the expense of two families was quite a strain on a small jewelry store in a town of two thousand and in a county in which there were only sixteen thousand people. (I find on looking up the matter that today there are five thousand less people in this county than there were 50 years ago, or only a little over eleven thousand people.) In order to make some more money and keep up the increased expense of sending the family to college, we took on the piano and organ business. We could do so with the same amount of rent and it was really a benefit to both businesses.

For instance, people were hesitant about going into a piano store and looking at a piano before they were ready to buy because they knew that the piano man was very anxious to sell and he would come out and bother them about buying before they were ready. By putting the pianos in the center of the store and the jewelry and silverware on the sides, when the customer would come in to look at some jewelry or to have his watch repaired, the family would look at the pianos thinking it wouldn't be noticed; but we had one of the salespeople in the store always taking down their names and what type of piano they liked best.

And so while I could work at the bench nearly all day and conduct the jewelry business in the day time, I would have the help load up a piano about four or five o'clock in the evening and then I would start to go to the home of one of these prospects. Very frequently by twelve or one o'clock in the morning I could have the piano sold and be back home; but, of course, there were exceptions, as we had no automobiles in those days - not even a dashboard on the wagon. We would have to sit up on a high seat right in the front in order to have room in the long wagon to hold the piano firmly. Very frequently in the daytime the roads would thaw and the tracks of the horses' hooves would make the roads very rough and then it would freeze at night. I could get out in the country before the freezing started at night, but if I didn't make a sale I had to haul the piano back to town. In order to keep warm, I would have to walk by the side of the wagon and be sometimes 15 or 20 miles in the country. Those were the days that if we could have had paved roads and the automobile and truck, it would have been a great blessing. But by combining the two businesses, one being run in the daytime and the other at night, we were enabled to make the business succeed.

There were many peculiar incidents connected with this piano business. As this county was small in population and in size, it would not pay to have over one piano company in the county, for there was not

enough business for two concerns. Therefore, frequently another firm would come in and when we would take a piano to a house, they would follow us and put one in also and it made competition very keen and very hard and virtually took the profit out of the business. But we used psychology in selling pianos just the same as we did in selling watches and always tried to keep the customer or the prospective buyer in the right frame of mind.

We nearly always found that it was the best psychology to talk to the man and his wife together, for almost invariably the farmer would want more corn, more land, and more livestock and didn't care for any musical instruments, while the wife and the daughter were very anxious to have a piano or an organ. Therefore, if we talked to the farmer only and allowed him to talk to the family, he could present arguments to them to keep them from urging him to buy it. So we made it a rule to talk to the man and his family together so that we could answer the arguments so far as we could that the farmer put up. But before we talked to a farmer, we invariably tried to put him in the right frame of mind.

If we went to a farmer and he was husking corn, we would agree to husk corn for one or two hours if he would agree to talk with us for that same length of time. We would start right in and help him and that would put him in a good frame of mind. If he was harvesting, we would help him harvest; or the man I had with me would take the place of the man I wanted to sell to.

I remember a young man by the name of John Ethel (who later became senator in Iowa and one of the prominent citizens) when he came to me for a job. He wanted to sell pianos and he could play a piano or an organ very well indeed. We made it a rule to play the type of music we thought was best suited to the farmer we called on. If we saw a violin hanging on the wall, he would play some jigs or from the surroundings he might have to play sacred music to get the best results.

After hiring this young man, I remember the first time I took him out to a farmer who was shocking oats and there were lots of ragweed in them and it was in the latter part of July and they were very heavy. I said to the young man who had on a high collar: "You

will have to shock oats while I talk to Mr. Schlagle." I saw the young man go down the field and throw off his coat and vest; and down the field a little farther, he took off his collar and opened his shirt. After he had shocked oats for about an hour, Mr. Schlagle said: "If you had told me when you first came that you wanted to sell me an organ - if you had told me that - I would have told you then that I didn't want an organ." The young man looked downhearted. I persuaded Mr. Schlagle to let me leave the organ until we could take it to some place else in the neighborhood, and we went home.

In a week or two we came back and Mr. Schlagle was stacking hay. I said to the young man: "You will have to get up on the stack in Mr. Schlagle's place or I won't be able to talk to him." So up on the stack Mr. Ethel went. I noticed the boys who were driving the horses began to speed up a little in order to smother the fellow on the stack. In about an hour's time I had sold Mr. Schlagle the organ. After the young man got down off the stack and we started back to town, he said to me: "Do you have to do this every time?" I said: "We have to do whatever is necessary to sell the instruments." But he was a young man with lots of determination and he stayed with us for a great many years.

A peculiar incident happened one time when we went over to the rough part of the country where we saw a violin on the wall of the farm house where we were calling. The young man supposed he would have to play some jigs and he rattled off one jig after another, but I looked at the man and saw that he wasn't pleased at all. I could see that something was wrong. Not being able to play anything but just one little doleful chord, I asked the young man to set himself down and let me play a little. This offended him and he left the house. I knew then that the man was religious and didn't like jigs very well, so I played this doleful chord and the man remarked: "Now I can tell something how that organ sounds." As I had only one chord to play, I had to repeat it a few times, but with the effect that I sold the instrument.

The young man waited to get it back on me and he didn't have to wait long. Out in another part of the county was a farmer who was well-to-do, but he was of a peculiar nature and lived off on a side road. There was only one farmer who lived beyond him down this lane, a Mr. Hartwick. This farmer, D. Hockersmith, had a woodpile at the front of the house in the lane and his farm was across the road. Invariably when anyone went up this lane they were going to either his house or to Mr. Hartwick's.

We decided to go out and try to sell D. Hockersmith. As we approached his house, out came D. Hockersmith and his wife whom he called Tillie. We persuaded him to let us put this organ in his house in order to show it to him. Being still in business with my father (which partnership lasted for over 30 years) and Mr. Hockersmith having a great deal of regard for father who bore a very splendid reputation in the community, he listened to our arguments on the organ; but his invariable answer would be: "That organ sounds pretty good, but I guess I won't buy it." Young Ethel thought he would make one last supreme effort to sell this organ and he got up and said: "Mr. Hockersmith, you know the firm of Sheaffer & Son is a very reliable firm. They have been in business here in Davis county for a great many years. Their word is just as good as their bond. You would take no risk in buying this instrument." Mr. Hockersmith listened and said: "Yes sir, I have known Mr. Sheaffer for many years. I have had many dealings with him. He's a very reliable man. I would take Mr. Sheaffer's word for anything, that is, the old gentleman." Ethel at that remark fell over backwards and gave up a yell and said: "Let's load up the organ." We loaded it up and he felt that he was even with me for that time when he failed to sell an organ by playing jigs and I made the sale by playing my one doleful chord.

But I had resolved that some day I was going to sell D. Hockersmith an organ. About a year from that time I loaded up a very fine organ, one much higher priced than the one we had had in his house before, and I asked my daughter, Mrs. Waldron who was single at that time if she would want to go to the country and if she could keep still and not say anything and wonder at what I was trying to do, and she agreed. The top of these organs was unscrewed and the back of the top was strapped to the back of the organ and canvass covered them so we could haul them.

I started up this lane and began to drive very slowly, for there was only one place I could go besides D. Hockersmith and that was Hartwick's. If Hockersmith thought I was coming to sell him this organ, I knew I wouldn't be able to sell him; and if he didn't come out to the road as he generally did when I went by, my cake would be dough. As I got near the house, there was no sign of Hockersmith or his wife coming to the woodpile and I had pulled the team up so that they were just barely moving. My daughter wanted to know what was the matter and I had to remind her of her promise not to say anything. We were just in front of the house and almost past when out came D. Hockersmith and Tillie. He said: "Hello, Mr. Sheaffer. Where are you going? Up to Hartwick's?" I said: "I am going in that direction." He came on out

in the road and, of course, I willingly stopped to talk to him. He said: "What kind of an organ have you there?" I told him it was a very fine one. He and Tillie became interested. He asked me the price of the instrument which was still on the wagon. I told him there was no need to price it, for Mr. Hartwick was the only farmer in this neighborhood able to buy one that fine and I had had an organ in his house much cheaper in price and he wouldn't buy it. He raised up the canvass and saw how beautiful it was and the plush lining in the top and he commented on it to his wife and again asked me to tell him the price. I insisted there was no need. He asked me if I wouldn't set it in the house so that he could see it. I said that it was too fine an instrument to be putting in and out of houses and that if I put it in a house it would be sold. He said he couldn't tell how it would sound. Finally, while Tillie played the pedals on the organ and while he lifted up the canvass and pressed down one key at a time, he suggested to his wife that it sounded pretty good, and she agreed. He insisted again that I tell him the price. I told him it was \$125 and the other that I had had in his house was \$75. He and Tillie went into consultation and felt that he didn't want Mr. Hartwick to have the finest organ in the neighborhood. He told me to put it in the house and that he would take it. This was one of the most peculiar sales I have ever made.

As I had stated before, there were so few people in the county that we had to fight very hard to keep out competitors. But at a later time, a couple of young men by the name of Kincartt and O'Neill came in and they were both very fine young fellows and very good salesmen. At this same time we had a Mr. W. L. Saunders, a brother-in-law, in the business who was quite a good salesman. We got into some laughable situations which seemed very serious at that time.

Kincartt and O'Neill would put a piano in a house and then we would go and put one in, too. Then everyone would present his arguments and tell the good qualities of his instrument as against the other. Generally, the music teacher in the neighborhood would be asked to decide the matter and many times expected some remuneration for the decision or a reward of some kind. It was not a very wholesome situation.

I remember that after we had beaten these young men eight or ten times in different deals, they laid a trap for us. One of the young men had an aunt by the name of Lunsford who lived in a small town in the southern part of the county and who wanted to buy a piano. They placed one of their Davenport and Tracy pianos (which was one of the makes they sold at that time) in the house and got word to us through some friend of the fact, knowing that we would take one of our pianos and put it in beside their piano in order to try to beat them in the sale not knowing that the matter was already decided that they would buy the Davenport and Tracy piano. The whole community was invited in to hear the arguments. This was done in order to make us feel pretty bad about our defeat. We fell into the trap very readily, but took a piano we thought would show up better. There were two forms of pinblocks used in pianos. The piano they were selling generally was the open pinblock; so we used one metal plate, for we felt it would give us the best of the argument.

First one side would have their chance to speak and then the other. We soon noticed, however, that when our competitors made a point, the whole crowd would cheer. They were undoubtedly in the house of their friends and their friends in great numbers had been invited there to help the plan through. They did not even bring their piano wagon, nor were they prepared to take their piano away, but came instead in a buggy (as there were no automobiles in those days). We made on final argument and finally Mr. Lunsford, who was an uncle by marriage but only as it was the wife who was the blood relation, got up and announced they had decided to buy the Davenport and Tracy piano. Everybody cheered.

As our team was out in the barn, I said: "Mr. Lumsford, would you be kind enough to help us with our team?" He graciously said he would. Our thought in that was if we got him out in the barn we would make a last desperate effort and as he would be by himself and as he was not a blood relation, it was our only hope. We got him out in the barn and showed him how much extra he was paying for his piano when it was no better and not even as good as ours, just on account of his wife's being a blood relative of one of the salesmen. We put up such a strong argument and made such a good price that before we left the barn we had his note for our piano. When we came into the house and he announced his decision to buy our piano, there was consternation in the opponent's camp. It was not understandable to them, but we graciously loaned the two boys our piano wagon and we road home in their buggy.

A little later there was a jewelry buyer at Milton, Iowa, by the name of Adkins who wanted to purchase a piano. Kincardt and O'Neill went down and fixed the deal with the music teacher who was also assistant cashier in the bank in this little town. My brother-in-law came to visit me and we had been so successful that I took him along and invited him to see how we could lick the other fellows. When we got down to the scene of action, I found that the job had been set up against us and that my brother-in-law surely had the laugh on me. We sent Mr. Saunders up to see the young lady to convince her we had the best piano, but to no avail. I sent him back the second time and he got a little peeved because he said it wouldn't be doing any good. But while he was gone, I went to Mr. Adkins and frankly told him what had happened. I said: "Mr. Adkins, if you would like to save \$75 on your piano instead of paying it for somebody to decide the thing for you, you can save \$75 if you buy this piano right now and then we can go in and go through this early tonight. After the music teacher has played both pianos, you just get up and announce yourself that you have decided to buy the Lakeside piano because you think it has the best tone."

Like the time before, the whole community was invited in to hear us get a good licking. The music teacher in playing the Davenport and Tracy piano played very lovely, but not so with our piano. But as we had the note for our piano and after the music teacher got through playing, Mr. Adkins got up and announced: "We have decided to buy the Lakeside piano because it has the best tone and we think it is the best piano." Well, naturally, the crowd was dumfounded and our competitors were stunned. When we left the house, they sought us out and said: "Well, boys, we are through. The only thing is we will leave the county and quit, but we want to know how you did it. Just tell us how you did this." That incident ended the keenest competition that I have ever had, even down to the present day.

There is many a small town in this country which has young men who are keen merchants and wonderful salesmen. If they could only be placed in the right positions, it would be a great benefit to them and to the concerns that they would go with.

In selling organs and pianos in those days, we frequently had to take in a horse or a little livestock. I myself know nothing about horses and therefore was handicapped quite considerably. We had a Mr. Dodson who used to sell organs for us and he was down to a little town by the name of Cantrill. There was a liveryman by the name of Cassidy and they called him "Slick." He was surely well named because he was a "slicker." We didn't allow our man to make any trades without an OK from us. He came in one day and said; "Slick Cassidy has an awful fine horse, just as slick and fine as butter out in the pasture. If we will take it in, he will buy an organ. I believe I can sell it to a great advantage." So I drove down some 20 miles to see this horse. When I got to the livery stable, I saw that nearly all of his livery horses were skin and bones. Over the muddy roads they were driven so hard that they couldn't keep any flesh on them. Then we went out to the field and saw this horse which was "just as slick and fine as butter." After we looked at the horse and Mr. Dodson and I rode away, I said; "Don't trade for that horse. If that horse were any good, he would use this horse and give some of those poor horses in the livery barn a rest. There is something wrong with it, so don't trade for it." So I went back home on the train and left him to drive the wagon through. But Slick Cassidy got hold of Dodson and convinced him that the horse was allright, and he traded for it. When he brought the horse home, he was the heaviest horse I had ever known. I took him for \$100.

At the time we had the piano and jewelry store, I had an uncle by the name of Tom Walton who was a horse buyer and made his headquarters in our store. He and a liveryman by the name of Hoke shipped their horses to W. P. Hall, the biggest horse buyer in the world, at Lancaster, Missouri. Well, of course, I didn't feel any too good about being cheated on this horse. I never said anything to my uncle about it, who was a very fine square man and helped me a great deal; but I knew of a horse trader there in the county who was a nephew of Tom Walton by the name of Bobby McGowan. So I sent for Bobby. As I had paid about \$100 for this horse, I showed him to Bobby and said; "Bobby, this is the heaviest horse you ever saw. What will you give me for it?" He said; "I will give you ten cords of wood." A cord of wood in this little town at that time was worth \$10. I said; "Bobby, you have bought a horse."

Since Bobby was a horse trader, he knew of a way to fix this horse up temporarily so the heavens wouldn't be noticed. He would hitch him to the rig and drive around the public square every once in awhile. One day when he had him hitched up (this horse being a very fine-looking animal), Doke and Walton, the horse buyers, happened to spy him, and as I had failed to say anything about it, they had begun to dicker with Bobby. Bobby told them he would take \$150 for the horse. Finally they offered him \$125. Bobby said: "Uncle Tommy, as long as you are in the family, I will let you have him. He is worth more money." When they came driving this heavy horse and he had sold him to my best friend, I felt pretty bad; but it was too late then to correct the mistake.

At a later time Mr. Doke still bought horses for W. P. Hall. While he was a fine man, he was a horse trader. We kept our team of horses and our piano wagon in his livery barn in Bloomfield, Iowa. We were both Masons and good friends, but I never depended on him for my judgment on horses, for Uncle Tom Walton was thoroughly honest and was my fiend and I always took his judgment. This is the same man that Bobby McGowan loaded the heavy horse on to.

After the partnership had been dissolved of Doke and Walton, Doke came in and said to me one day: "Why don't you let me furnish your horses for you?" I buy my watches and diamonds and things from you. I take your word for them and I have always found it good. I will treat you just as fairly on anything and on any horses you want to buy as you have treated me." I didn't say anything, but still expected to depend upon Uncle Tom.

One day, Mr. Saunders traded for a horse that would go on the market in fine shape. His wind was good, but he would become overheated if he was worked too much and for that reason we couldn't use him because our driving on the wagon was very hard work. It happened that Uncle Tom was out of town and Doke knowing that, persuaded Saunders to trade him this horse which would go on the market for a gray family horse called "Possum." Why Mr. Saunders traded without consulting me, I could not understand, but he did. When Uncle Tom came home and Saunders told him he had traded for "Possum," he said: "Doke knew Possum was moon-eyed. With the hard work on that wagon, the horse will be blind in 30 days. He has cheated you badly."

As Doke had made such statements to me about how honestly he would treat me, I made up my mind, instead of turning the other cheek, I would get even with him some day, as that was about the meanest trick I had served on me for a long time. So I told Saunders to say nothing about it, but to wait until an opportunity came; when an opportunity came, if it was three, four, or five years, that we would land on Doke.

One day about three years afterwards, he came into the jewelry store and said: "I believe I have found a horse out here that we can fix up and sell to Doke. I can buy him for \$5. He is a big fine horse, but he kind of goes on the bias when he runs." I said: "Well, George Goode and Harris are two good horsemen and they live out in that neighborhood and I will get my wagon and go out and we will see this horse." In talking to George Goode and Mr. Harris, they said that if this horse were taken up and fed and curried, his bad point would be hardly noticeable in him and his wind was good. We gave \$5 for the horse and brought him in. When we got him in as good a shape as possible, we waited our time.

As Doke was then the leading horse buyer in the town of Bloomfield, Iowa, whenever an outside buyer would come in, he would bid up the price and make it pretty tough for the other buyer in order to drive him out. Right by the jewelry store was a livery barn owned by Mac Wise. By the papers we noticed that a buyer by the name of Wisecarver of Fairfield, Iowa, would be down to buy horses on a Saturday. We took this horse and put him in Mac Wise's livery stable, but instructed Mac that he could not sell the horse to Wisecarver but to get the best price Wisecarver would make and that we would guarantee the wind of the horse. Doke had seen this horse out in a little lot several times and thought he knew about what he was, but of course he had never looked at him very closely.

Wisecarver came to town and offered us \$130 for this horse, as his wind was good. I told Mac Wise to let Doke have an opportunity to make a bid. (Now even the livery barn owner had not noticed a thing wrong with this horse.) He said: "Doke offers only \$130 for this horse and I think we ought to sell him to Wisecarver because he made the best offer." I said: "No, Doke is a home buyer and you let Doke have this horse. Now you know that the bank is only one-half block away from your livery barn. When you guarantee the wind of this horse and Doke will look at him and you won't have to wind him because his wind is good, as soon as Doke

writes the check for this horse you hike to the bank and get it cashed because when he backs this horse out of the stall he may fall down." Mac Wise made a beeline to the bank and got his \$130. Sure enough, the horse went down when it was backed out of the stall.

As long as I lived there, he was one of the best friends I ever had; but he never mentioned the fact again that the horse fell down when he backed him out of the stall. I gave some of the money from the sale of the horse to Mac Wise and a great portion of it to Saunders. I actually lost money on the deal, but at least we got even with Duke. It was never my purpose to allow anybody to treat me any better than I would treat them in return. I never did go much for turning the other cheek.

In this little town we had a group of men: Charlie Fortune, John Burgess, Frank Travis, and later Harry Burchett and sometimes Harvey Leech; but there were five or six of us who went fishing together the week after the Fourth of July for 24 consecutive years. John Burgess was my competitor in the jewelry business, and he made it so hard for me that I had to stay pretty close; for he really was a splendid salesman and a good mixer and was just as hard and keen a competitor as I ever had in the jewelry business. In fact, he was equal to the competition, and more so, than we had with Kincartt and O'Neill in the piano business. Our plan was to fight pretty hard for 51 weeks in the year and then go fishing for the other week and talk very frankly to one another. I learned to become very fond of him and to respect him very much and especially to respect his ability to gain the good will of the community and make sales to his friends.

There also came later into the crowd Sol Lorenz, who was a furniture man and a very likeable fellow. Later when I traded for a jewelry store in Fort Madison, Sol Lorenz became one of our most persistent fishermen.

One day when we had gone down to Mr. Brewster's club house on the river and had been there for a day or two, Sol Lorenz put in his entire time almost standing out in the sun - not even in the shade - on the bank of the river and fished continuously. Sol fished for two or three days and hadn't caught a fish. I knew of a fish market about four miles from the camp. Sol fished all morning and came in for his lunch and then went back in the afternoon. About three o'clock when I knew the fishermen would be in with their catch, I went down to the fish market and bought a fine string of live fish and strung them on a rope. Out in front of the club house where the water was only two feet deep as it was back water from the Keckuk dam, I put these fish. Then I went out and threw two hooks and lines in the water without any bait on (for there wasn't any fishing in two feet of water). Once in awhile I would pull my pole out as if I were catching a fish. Sol was several hundred yards away across a point and kept looking around and seeing me pull my pole out. About five o'clock he sauntered over and came there and asked me how my luck was. These fish began to flop in the water and he went down by the edge of the water and pulled up this string of fish, and he said he didn't understand why he couldn't catch any. I told him the trouble of it was that he didn't know how to fish.

After we had fished for a few minutes, I told him I had better take the fish in and cook them for dinner. I told him to watch my lines and be patient and wait just a little longer, which he did. About seven o'clock dinner was ready. Sol had stood there patiently and watched all the lines without a single bite. When he came into the house, he said he couldn't understand it, for the minute he came to a place the fish quit biting. I said I would take him out some day and teach him how to catch fish. When he found out what had happened, which was sometime later, he really felt that he had had quite a joke played on him.

At this writing there are only three of the original crowd left - it has been now, I think, nearly 40 years ago - and they are Frank Travis, Harry Burchett, and myself.

Living in this little town where there was virtually no fishing and having gone fishing so many years, we would start out in a long spring wagon that would hold our crowd. Then we had another spring wagon that would carry our tents and our cooking equipment, for in those days it was rather handy. We had a sleeping tent which we put up very solidly and always ditched it and prepared it for a storm and drove the stakes deep. We also had a canopy top screened in that was our sitting

room, and then another tent that we had for our kitchen. Once in awhile we would get a pretty severe storm which would blow down our canopy and sometimes our kitchen; but we paid particular attention to our sleeping tent and always cut brush and had hay and grass for our bed so we were up high enough inside of the tent that no matter how hard it rained we were fairly comfortable.

In those days we crossed the state line from Iowa into Missouri. But this season the Missouri authorities had passed a law against Iowa fishermen coming down without a license, about which we knew nothing. There were about seven of us in the crowd that year. Along in the evening after we had had quite a heavy rain, we saw two men coming toward our camp in a buggy. We had taken one of the natives from that part of the country along with us and he said: "There comes the sheriff and the constable!" Our equipment and things were out in sight and there was no chance to conceal them. We were very cordial to them, but they insisted that we go to the county seat with them which was about 30 miles away. We asked how they were going to take us. They said they would use our teams and spring wagons. We told them that our horses were worn out and could not make the trip; that it would be impossible for them to use our teams because the horses had been driven very hard that day. We gave them a drink or two a piece, but the sheriff was a little cautious. After the constable had had a few drinks, he was perfectly willing to let us off, but the sheriff insisted that we go to the county seat. We finally made a compromise that we would send two of our men to the county seat with them in the buggy.

We sent Frank Travis, who was court reporter for Judge Eichelberger who was judge of the court house in Bloomfield, Iowa. In Lancaster, Missouri, just across the line in the next county, Judge Shelton presided there. Judge Shelton and Judge Eichelberger were very great friends and Judge Eichelberger thought a great deal of Frank Travis, his reporter, and Travis also knew Judge Shelton very well. So when Judge Shelton saw young Travis, he let us all off, although we had pulled up stakes and were ready to leave. But it interfered with our fishing trip a little that year.

There was very little fishing around Bloomfield except a little creek called Fox River. So having gone away on fishing trips for eight or ten years without bringing home any fish (as we generally cooked and ate our fish while away on the trip), the community began to kid us

a little about our ability to catch any fish. So the next year we took along a hoop net and set it in the Sheridan River and were fortunate enough to catch a 37-pound catfish. This we packed in ice and shipped it home to a jewelry store in which I was interested and we had the fish dished out to the community and cut in slices. This restored our reputation as fishermen.

We also took a seine along and seined in a lake near there and caught quite a sizeable string of fish. We wanted our reputation as fishermen restored fully, so we strung these fish on a long line and the native of that part of the country who went along with us and who was only about five feet tall was placed behind these fish. Naturally, the fish showed up as big as the man and it looked like an enormous catch. From that time on our reputation as fishermen was above par and we were not required to bother bringing any fish home thereafter.

On these fishing trips each one had his duties to perform, and there was plenty to do about keeping a fishing camp in good shape. It fell my lot to do the cooking. I found that it wasn't as necessary to have the food cooked so good as it was to have the men very hungry before they sat down to a meal. So I sometimes would delay the meal a little until they got pretty hungry and no matter how I cooked things they always tasted good to the men. Because of this psychological method of handling the cooking, my reputation advanced a little.

Many jokes, of course, were played on the different members at different times. I had cleaned a rabbit that didn't look any too good to me at one time and from then on it was impossible for me to eat any more rabbit. I had often spoken about my not liking rabbit. One day while we were out hunting, the boys killed nine young squirrels and one young rabbit which was about the size of the squirrels. They cooked the meal that day and put this young rabbit, which was virtually the same size as the squirrels, in the skillet with the nine squirrels and cooked with them in the same skillet would make it look and taste a good deal like squirrel. The men took special pains to give me the rabbit and I bragged how splendid it was, not discovering until I could see the boys wink at one another that I had been the victim of a practical joke; but at the same time the rabbit did taste good and the joke was put over in very neat shape.

Also in our jewelry store we sold sewing machines. In order to sell them you had to know how to ruffle, tuck, and bind. I had to become quite a skillful operator and I took the time and pains to do these things. One day I sold a sewing machine to Columbus Goode. He had a 160-acre farm and I supposed, of course, I would have no trouble in getting my money. He was very religious and I couldn't help thinking but what the sale was a good one. But after I had sold him this machine, I found out that his farm was mortgaged for almost as much as it was worth. He came in one day and was feeling quite religious and said he wanted to do everything to pay his debts. He told me he had some nice pigs or shoats and if I would come out to his farm, I could take my choice of them. I got a lumber wagon and hired a team and drove ten miles to his farm. When I got there his religion had cooled off and as he had not expected me to come, all he would give me were four runty pigs. I took the pigs back to town. After feeding them and taking good care of them and as it was a good year and the price of pork being good, I got the money out of my sewing machine.

I had another experience with mortgaged farms. I sold a farmer an organ for \$95 and found out later that Will Stoeckel, who had a mortgage on nearly all the farms in that part of the country, also had a mortgage on this farm. As Will and I played in the band together and were very great personal friends, I didn't think much about it. I said to Will: "I have sold So and So an organ and I have his note for it." He said: "I am the only man who can collect it." I said: "I suppose you are." He said: "I will give you 50 cents on the dollar for the note." That, of course, took all my profit and a good deal besides away; but as I had no other way of collecting it, I took his offer.

There came a time a little later when I thought it was pretty tough that Will Stoeckel was hard-boiled, but he said he never let friendships interfere with his business. A little later I had occasion to sell an organ to another person who had a mortgage held by Will. I said to Will: "I haven't sold this organ yet, and before I sell it I want to know what you will give me for this note." He said: "As you have not sold it, I will give you 95 cents on the dollar." I went out and sold the organ and cashed the note for 5% discount.

A little later I had occasion to buy my first home, a five-room house for which I gave \$460 and a colt that I had. Will Stoeckel had a mortgage on this home for \$200 bearing 10% semi-annual interest, which was the prevailing rate in those days. As interest at the rate of 10% semi-annually would double in seven years with compound interest, I wanted to get this mortgage paid; so I went to Stoeckel and told him that I wanted to pay the mortgage. He said: "Your mortgage has two years yet to run." Now Stoeckel was a very wealthy man in those days and I was just about as poor as anyone could be. Stoeckel said: "I will cancel that mortgage, but you will have to pay the 10% semi-annual interest for the two years yet to run." Fortunately I had enough money to do it and I paid the mortgage and the interest. He repeated to me again: "I never let friendships interfere with my business."

A great many years later after I had moved to Fort Madison and the tough times came after 1929, Stoeckel got in a tough financial condition and it looked as though they were going to clean him up. He and his wife made a trip to Fort Madison and they were very cordial and all. After we had given him and his wife a nice dinner and had treated him royally, he took me to one side in one of the upstairs rooms of my home and told me what his mission was. He said he was going to go broke, but I could save him if I would go his security for \$50,000 with a Chicago bank. I had an opportunity then to remind that "I never let friendships interfere with business," and I didn't go his security. However, he did weather the storm and at the time this is being written, he is still in business and I understand is being fairly successful. But I can hardly believe that the Stoeckel philosophy of friendships in business is correct. There should be some tempering and some justice in all transactions.

In those early days when selling organs and pianos, many circumstances came up that are hardly believable. As I have explained before, we had this long wagon that was half longer or maybe twice as long as the average spring wagon. I had sold a piano to a Miss Mae Stockberger and was to deliver it on a certain day. We had all forgotten that there was to be a big circus in Centerville, Iowa, which was about 15 miles away from where this piano was to be delivered. When I went to the home, the family had gone to the circus and the whole neighborhood apparently had gone to the circus also. I searched all over, but could find no one to help me unload the piano. As it was in the morning and I had either to wait until late at night after they got home from the circus, I decided to unload the piano myself. The piano was quite large and probably weighed about one thousand pounds, and I wondered how it could be done. In those days we had rail fences. I build a rail pen under the back axles and took the wack wheels off. Then I pulled out a rail at a time until finally I let the back end of the wagon down onto the front

porch and slid the piano out and got it in the house myself. When the family came home, they found their piano delivered in good shape. Of course, I had the advantage of having to lift only one end at a time, which I could do as I was used to it, but it shows that if you keep at a thing diligently you can overcome many obstacles which seem impossible to master. Of course, after the piano was out of the wagon, I had to pry up the back axle and put the rails under it again in order to put the wheels on.

In the spring of the year when the roads got pretty muddy, you would have some pretty tough experiences. I remember once of taking a team of horses out and as the roads were muddy, I didn't think they had to be rough shod. After I had gotten out between 15 and 20 miles from home and had failed to sell anybody the instrument which was on the wagon, I started back and went through the timber. In the timber, ice was still left on the ground and these horses were smooth shod. Before I could get out, they had broken their harness and had caught themselves in it. It was beginning to get dark and as I was a good ways from home, the natural tendency was to get home as soon as possible after I got out of the timber. But when I was about four miles from home, I saw Work Clark's house lighted up. I remembered that he didn't have an organ. I was pretty discouraged, and I went in and made a fight. In less than an hour I had sold the organ. After I made the sale they got me some dinner and by the time I got started home, it was pretty late. But it shows that it pays never to give up, but to make another effort. After all of that long discouraging day and the harness being all tied up and the horses in bad shape, the sale was finally made and everything seemed much brighter for me. It is impossible to realize in these days of cement roads and enclosed trucks the hardships and the slow mode of going; where it took me sixteen hours to reach a place in those days, a person now could reach it in an hour easily.

There came a time, however, when the two families were growing up and had to attend school that it seemed almost impossible to send the different ones to college and make enough money to keep up decent living expenses, as in those days even living expenses were gradually increasing. The writer sold his little home, for which he gave \$460 and a colt, for \$750 cash. This money was turned back into the business although it was made personally by me on the outside. I then bought a home from my grandfather, Ira D. Walton, for \$10 monthly payments. I paid this out and traded this property to J. T. Walton for his property of eight acres out on the east side of town. I went into the breeding of pure-bred Light Brahma chickens and was quite successful, winning many prizes and selling some of the chickens for as high as \$20 a piece. My flock had grown so good that when I found out that I either had to give up the jewelry and piano business or the chicken business, I sold my last 200 chickens, or what would be called the culls, for \$2 a piece. While the house was a fair-sized one, still it wasn't modern as I didn't have the money to modernize it. I began to look for a way to get it in shape to trade it for a farm. I bought 1,000 peach trees and as I could not afford to hire them set out, I set most of them out at night by lantern light. When they came into bearing, I traded to a man by the name of James Varner for a 188-acre farm.

Mr. Varner was a very lazy farmer and had only 40 acres of meadow. He had allowed the brush to grow around the edge of the meadow until he mowed only about ten acres in the center of this meadow. This was a rolling farm and covered with hazel-brush. The house had never been painted and it wasn't in a very presentable appearance to get much money out of it. I took the farm in at \$20 an acre, but by the different trades I had made, the farm had cost me very little. But how to get the farm in shape in order to sell it, was a problem. Having an uncle, J. T. Walton, who knew quite a bit about sheep, I had him go with me to buy a flock of sheep. We fenced this 188-acre farm into 40-acre fields. I hired a young man by the name of Charles Fox who was a hard worker, but had never managed to make any money. I had to buy him two milk cows, a team of horses, and plows and harrows. He would cut this brush off a 40-acre field right down to the ground and then we would turn the entire flock of sheep into the field and they would eat the sprouts as they came up and kill the roots. When this was done several times, the blue grass would come up naturally. After the sheep had eaten the sprouts down pretty closely, we turned them into the pasture and in this way kept them in good shape. By keeping up this process we cleaned all the brush off the farm and had 188 acres of native blue grass pasture. The wool and the lambs in the meantime paid Mr. Fox out and when I sold the farm, he had a flock of sheep, his horses, his cows, and was out of debt.

Then the question was how to find some way to sell or trade this farm for a jewelry store, as I wanted to get into a larger place where I could make a living for the two families and by having two stores (it looked like it might be done). I was reading the Key Stone, a jewelers' journal published in Philadelphia, and saw that there was a jewelry store for sale. I answered the ad and told the man that I was long on farms but short on jewelry stores; and if he would like to trade his jewelry store for a farm that we might make a trade. It happened that this man was M. L. Bowen who had a nice jewelry store in Fort Madison, Iowa. Mr. Bowen wrote me and asked me how much I wanted for my farm.

As I had never traded a farm, I went to my supposed friend, W. J. Stoeckel, who was trading farms for goods all the time, and asked him what I should ask for this farm in a trade. He said I should ask \$75 an acre. I said: "The farm isn't worth \$75 an acre." He Said: "You didn't ask me what the farm was worth. You asked me what you should ask for a farm in a trade. You will find if you will trade for a store of jewelry, you will have to pay a plenty good price for a lot of old junk which isn't worth anything and you had better have your farm priced high enough." I finally gained enough courage to ask \$65 an acre for this farm.

to

Mr. Bowen wrote/a banker in Bloomfield, Iowa, where I was living at that time, and asked him what the farm was really worth. The banker knew I owned this farm and that I wanted to make a trade. He never consulted me about answering Bowen, but just voluntarily wrote Bowen that the farm was worth \$50 an acre, which it wasn't. Bowen wrote me back a very mean letter and said: "Your farm isn't worth \$65 an acre. I know what it is really worth. You are not as smart as you think you are." The general tone of his letter was very insulting. I wrote him back and said: "Mr. Bowen, I have never said the farm is worth \$65 an acre, but I do say that if you ever buy it from me or get it in a trade from me, that is what you will have to pay for it. If your jewelry store were as fine and your trade were as good as how you say, you do not need to trade it for any farm, but instead you could sell it and get cash for it."

I naturally supposed that that was the end of this trade. But to my great surprise sometime afterward, Mr. Dabney, a real estate agent and a good friend of mine, handed me a letter which he had received

from Bowen and the purport of the letter was virtually this: "Dabney, if you will help me skin Sheaffer on a farm trade for my jewelry store, I will give you \$200." I thought this was very fine of Dabney to come over and show me the letter. I said to him: "What do you charge for selling a farm?" He said: "I charge \$1 an acre." I said: "If you get the \$200 from Bowen for skinning me and I give you \$1 an acre for selling the farm, you will make \$388 if the trade is made. So go ahead, but with one understanding, that Bowen will have to go and see the farm before I will trade with him and then he will have to agree to take it in at \$65 an acre if I do trade."

So sometime later he met Bowen at Pulaski, a very small town, and went down and looked over the farm. In the meantime we had painted the house and had the farm looking pretty well. As he came up on the morning train, they felt he would want to go back on the afternoon train and Dabney said that I had better prepared to go down if Bowen wanted me to; therefore, I had my grip packed. Bowen and Dabney came into the store about an hour before train time. I had never seen Bowen before and Dabney introduced him. I noticed that he was rather a nervous sort of fellow. He started right in and said: "Well, what do you want to do?" I said: "Well, I don't know. You have been down to see the farm and I told you that I wanted and wouldn't take less than \$65 an acre for it in a trade." Bowen said: "I will take the farm in at \$65 an acre if you will give me 100 cents on the dollar for my jewelry store." My answer was that I didn't know whether his store was worth 50 cents on the dollar. He said: "Come and see it." I said: "All right, I will come down some day." He said: "Why not go down tonight?" I said: "What is the hurry?" He said: "We have been fooling with this trade for several months and I want either to make the trade or to break off negotiations." I told him: "Mr. Dabney is going on the train and I can probably get there." I knew that Dabney had been working very hard to make the \$388. So, as I had my grip already packed, I made the train.

I went down and looked over the inventory of the stock of goods. This was on the sixth of April, 1906, and he had invoiced in January of that year. Subtracting his sales and adding the invoices showed that his stock invoiced \$12,152.00, and the farm at \$65 an acre would come to approximately \$11,000.00. I checked the stock of goods and found over \$8,000 worth of good sterling silver, diamonds, and solid gold jewelry. As I had worked in a jewelry store all my life, I knew what the merchandise was really worth. I opened the drawers under neath the case and found about \$1,000 worth of junk that was in the invoice at full price. I just shut the drawers and never said anything about it because I thought he would feel better if he thought he was loading it on to me without my knowing it.

After I had looked the stock over, I asked Bowen what he wanted to do. He said if I would give him the difference between \$11,000 and \$12,152, he would make the trade. I asked to see the sales book. He said he didn't have one. I then asked him how he arrived at the amount of \$12,152 if he didn't add the bills and subtract the sales. I said: "You have a sales book all right." Then I made him get it. I discovered then why he wanted to trade so badly. He had sold less than \$1,000 in merchandise from January 1 to the sixth day of April, 1906, and, of course, was losing money. I remarked then that if I had a store that was losing money that way, I would be inclined to give it away. As he had offered \$200 to have a man help skin me, I didn't feel under any obligations whatever. He had not asked me what the farm was worth. He had not offered to trade man to man; so I let him do his own trading.

I said: "I won't give you the difference." I had made up my mind then to get \$75 an acre for the farm, just what Stoeckle told me I should get, as Bowen was a rich man and was trying to put it over me. I said: "I will take \$300 difference between the store and the farm." That would virtually give me \$75 an acre for the farm. He said he wouldn't do it. I said there was one fine thing about it - he could keep the jewelry store and I could keep the farm. Then I saw Mr. Dabney get a little nervous for fear that he would lose his \$388 and he began to work on Bowen. They went off and went into a huddle. Finally Bowen came back and asked me how long I would give him to make up his mind. I told him: "Until the train leaves for Red Oak." He knew that I had a deal on in that town. He went home and consulted his wife and came back, and the trade was made.

This store was in a small building and was very dark and the fine stock of goods didn't show up to good advantage. I had a widow, Mrs. Sadie Spreen, build a store for me near there and I moved in the new location by fall. In the new quarters the business grew very fast and I was able to make very nice money and increase this business many fold. When I sold this store to Mr. Lerche, my watchmaker, and W. L. Saunders, my brother-in-law, in 1913, it invoiced \$45,000. However, I sold it to them for \$35,000, taking \$10,000 off the invoice. They, however, threw out nearly every good thing I had had in the store and in a few years went broke.

In other words, I had taken a store that invoiced only \$12,000 and after keeping an expensive family, in less than seven years I increased the inventory about \$33,000, or nearly three times what it

WAS originally. It shows that money can be made in almost any-size town, even in a luxury line like jewelry, if you work hard enough and go out after the business. Not only did these men take the same business that I had built up and lose it all in just a few years, but when I sold our Bloomfield store to my watchmaker for \$5,000 less than it invoiced and let him invoice it, in a few years he lost it and virtually made no money.

Close application to any business, giving it serious thought almost day and night so that you are able to make the right decisions, is what makes any business successful. If too much of one's thoughts are on other things than your business, there will be many a valuable discovery in your business that is never thought of; wherein, if one's business is given close attention and close thought about how you can improve it, many a new discovery and additional sale can be made which are never made otherwise. When you look at the record of industry which shows that about only 10% of the retailers of the United States make money, that 45% just exist, and the other 45% fail, you can see from these figures how necessary it is that those who want to be successful must be very alert setting an example of working fast and accurately for all their employees and giving a great part of their thought and attention to their business. It is the only way that anyone can signally succeed. I don't mean by this that there isn't time for recreation when business should be forgotten; but to many people their hobbies are more important than their businesses and they receive the greatest part of their thought, when the business should have by far the great majority of their thought, ~~when the business should have by far the~~ ~~majority of their thought~~, although their recreation must be of sufficient time to keep them in good health.

As I was reading an ad one night of Jules Axt, a druggist (who later was one of our vice presidents for many years) featuring the Conklin pen which had a hump or a crescent on one side, I was impressed with the fact that it was very clumsy and thought surely that somebody ought to think of a filling device which was neater and more practical. By morning I had thought out the lever filling device and I took out a patent on it in 1908. I was like most people that had taken out their first patent; I thought when I got the patent, that that would keep everybody else from making it. But, unfortunately, so many patent attorneys take out patents which are not really worth the paper they are written on; they do it just for a fee. However, my first lever patent wasn't as practical as it might have been, for it required the expansion of the rubber sac to close the lever and when the sac deteriorated, the lever might not snap shut.

A little later I invented a lever bar that operated and held the lever in an open or closed position irrespective of the rubber reservoir. This was a great improvement over the first pen and is the pen we are still making as a lever pen today. But finding out how worthless my first patent was, I took great care in taking out this second patent and fortunately had a splendid patent attorney by the name of Frank Brown, of Chicago, Illinois. The claim which protected us most was a claim that said: "of means operable of holding the lever in an open or closed position irrespective of the rubber reservoir." Now, the fact that we stated "of means operable" didn't make any difference how you held a lever in an open or closed position; if you did it, you were infringing on our patent. I might have described that with a double bar or a single bar and many other combinations of holding the lever in an open and closed position, but the fact that we got through the patent with the simple words "of means operable of holding the lever in an open or closed position irrespective of the rubber reservoir" was a very important claim and was the broadest claim we could have written. In taking out patents there is a great deal of attention paid to the describing of your patent. But if you can get in a claim that virtually says that if anyone does what you are doing or the words "of means operable," that is about the broadest claim which can be gotten.

I was afraid to put my patent on the market. I had built up the jewelry business in Fort Madison until I had an income of ten or twelve thousand a year and it seemed to me at the age of 45, which I was when I went into the fountain pen business, that I would be foolish to risk what I had worked so hard to build up at that time in life knowing that the other big companies which were worth millions would begin patent litigation and I probably would lose everything I had - so I waited five years. I was afraid of the selling end; I wasn't afraid of what we could manufacture, but I was very afraid that we could not sell the pens against such great competitors. One company at that time had about 85% of all the fountain pen business and was very powerful, and I had very little money outside of the jewelry store.

One day Mr. George Kraker, who had once travelled for the Conklin Pen Company, came along and convinced me that he could sell all the pens that we could manufacture. He persuaded me to let him and Mr. Ben Coulson, who had also travelled for the Conklin Pen Company and was a good salesman, do the selling and have me do the manufacturing. A contract was entered into wherein I gave them 33-1/3% to do all the selling and I received all the rest. They opened an office in Kansas City in the Gumbel Building and they began to sell pens in June, 1912. The first sale was made in Columbia, Missouri, to the Missouri Store Company, a jewelry run by Claude Wheeler. The Missouri Store Company are still a fine representative of the Sheaffer Pen Company.

The pens began to sell quite fast and we were having trouble in manufacturing them. As the levers were made out of Monel metal and they were drilled with a little #69 drill, we broke thousands of drills. I went East and worked with the die makers and we had a terrible time in those days to get a die made to strike up a lever that we could drill readily. We also had great trouble in getting a pencil clutch made that would hold an over-sized lead and then take an under-sized lead. As the standard size of leads was .0455, when the molds were made they were made so that they would be a little under-sized and then the molds would wear more in some places than in others and the size of the leads would vary and we would have leads from .0455 to .047. The only temper given those clutches was that given when we struck them up and they were made of high-brass. When you put an .047 lead into a pencil and then would follow with an .0455, the clutch would spread until the smaller lead would drop out. We kept working on a machine until we developed a machine there in the factory that would take a ribbon of Monel metal and make up nearly fifty thousand clutches in eight hours. The machine is still in operation today and we can run it only a fraction of the time. But this gave us a wonderful clutch that would hold any-sized lead and with the sturdy pencil we made, it gave us a splendid reputation for a fine pencil.

Kraker and Coulson wished to become interested in the manufacturing. I wished to have them interested, for I couldn't afford to pay 33-1/3% for selling. On January 1, 1913, we incorporated for \$35,000. It was agreed that I should always have 51% of the stock and that Kraker and Coulson should have 40% of the stock. Coulson couldn't raise the money, so he went to Abilene, Texas, to see his brother. He needed \$5,000 to finish out his 20%; but his brother argued and said: "Ben, you are now 40 years of age and you have made no money. What assurance have I that you can pay this back? You have never shown the ability to make money or to save it." Coulson came home very disheartened. I had never seen his brother, but I sat down and wrote him a letter. As a result of that letter, he sent back a check to his brother for \$5,000. I felt that the way Coulson acted later in the deal, he didn't appreciate this effort on my part very much.

The first year we did a nice business and our profits were \$17,500, as I remember or something near this figure, showing about 50% profit on our invested capital. The business was increasing so fast that we saw we had to increase our capital. Now, it was in the written agreement that I should always have 51% of the stock and that Kraker and Coulson should always have 40%. But we had to take in some outside money

and Mr. Brewster, a banker and a good friend, came into our company. As we were letting these outsiders in, I told Kraker and Coulson that it would cut their interest to 35% if I kept my 51%. They agreed that they should have their interest cut to 35%. It was very difficult for me to keep 51%, but I was determined to do so. As we had a written agreement that they should have 40% and as this new arrangement was only an oral agreement that they would have their interest cut to 35% and we were putting the money in quickly because this was in December and we had to get ready for the first of the year and had to spend this money right away, I didn't think it was necessary for me to have my two partners put the new agreement down in writing. Of course, that is where I made a mistake.

When we got the money all in, Kraker and Coulson saw they had me. Then they insisted on the written agreement being lived up to, that they should have 40%. If they got 40%, it would cut me down to 46%, or less than control. Well, as Mr. Kraker was our vice president and Mr. Coulson was our treasurer, I said: "Boys, this is crooked. Before I will stay in partnership with men who are crooked, I will liquidate the assets of the company and pay the stockholders what is coming to them." After this conference I walked home with Ben Coulson. As Mr. Kraker had been the man who had been doing all the talking, I said to Mr. Coulson as we walked along: "Ben, what are you going to do?" Are you going to stick by your word?" He said: "I will let you know in the morning." I said: "Well, Ben, do you have to study overnight whether or not you are going to be honest?" He said: "I will let you know in the morning."

When two men are crooked, they are suspicious of one another. As Kraker and Coulson had a clause in our contract that it took 75% of the voting stock to change the salaries, Kraker thought I was trying to buy Coulson's 20% of stock so I could change the by-laws and obliterate this unfair contract. I no more than got home than the phone rang. Mr. Kraker was on the phone: "I would like to see you." I said: "All right." He came down and said: "Will you buy my stock?" I said: "Yes." He said: "Will you give me \$150 a share for it. We have earned 50% this year." I said: "Yes." So I bought his stock and let Mr. Brewster have a portion of it. Then, of course, I cancelled this contract which had tied me down so that I couldn't change salaries in the business without the acquiescence of Kraker and Coulson. Mr. Brewster was a wonderful friend and a very straightforward business man, but he got scared pretty easily.

Mr. Kraker came to us one day and said: "I know you have no use for me." I said: "No, I haven't, George. You can never work in the office again. I wouldn't trust you with money at all." He said: "I have a plan whereby you won't have to trust me. You know my old territory for the Conklin Pen Company was Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, and part of Colorado. I want you to enter into a contract with me to sell Sheaffer merchandise at 10% above cost for this territory for only ten years. I will furnish the show cases and all expenses of building up this trade in this territory and if I don't build it up, I can't make any money. I will pay you cash in advance before you ship the goods, and you know I can sell goods. I will build this territory to a fine business in ten years and then it will be all built up for you. The show cases will all revert to you and you will have this territory in fine shape, and you will have all the rest of the United States to sell in."

I didn't want to have anything to do with him, but Mr. Brewster found that he had a brother in the saloon business in Illinois who was quite well off and that they really had more money than we had. Mr. Brewster thought that if we didn't enter into this contract they would start a competing company and cause us lots of trouble. So finally I acquiesced, only to find that they had entered into this contract for the purpose of keeping us out of this territory and had actually started the Kraker Pen Company in Kansas City, Missouri, with \$50,000 capital. They had hired my superintendent to swear that he was the inventor of my lever pen. I understand they gave him \$3,500 for doing this, but I can't verify this.

They started an interference suit in Washington against us to take our patent away from us and attempted to use this contract to keep us out of the territory they were going to build up their business in. But they didn't go into the legal part of it quite strong enough. Our attorney told us that they couldn't use that contract because since they had started in business, it was illegal. We then went into court and cancelled the contract and then a long series of law suits and fighting started. It took, I believe, almost $3\frac{1}{2}$ years of litigation before we finally validated our lever patent that they tried to take away from us. They had an attorney by the name of Lotz, of Chicago, and we had Frank Brown, of Chicago. Frank Brown, as I formerly have said, was a very splendid attorney and very painstaking in his work.

Many peculiar circumstances came up with this case. One I recall was when we were taking testimony in the McCormick Building in Chicago. Julius Snell, a fountain pen holder maker of New York, was our main witness and they waived cross examination of him and then waited three years and called him as their witness so that they could cross examine him and break down his testimony. The time limit for the case was only a few weeks off. At four o'clock in the evening they notified us (it was Tuesday evening) that they would take testimony in New York on Thursday morning with Julius Snell as a witness and examine him. Mr. Brown was pretty badly disturbed. He said: "It is very necessary that Julius Snell read his testimony over." He testified formerly that he came to Fort Madison, Iowa, on a trip on the North Western Road. The North Western Road doesn't go through Fort Madison, Iowa, and this mistake was caused by the fact that he had never been West before and he went from Chicago over the North Western Road up into central Iowa to visit some friends and he got his railroads mixed up. Mr. Brown said it was perfectly legal for him to read his testimony over. He took me out of the room in which we were giving testimony and told me this: "I don't want anybody to know you went to New York, but I want this testimony gotten to Julius Snell." I said: "I don't see how I can catch the train in time."

I went downstairs and had a taxicab waiting for me and I told the driver when I came in, to make a run for my hotel and that I had phoned to have my grips packed and everything ready for me. I did this because I didn't want them to go to New York with me on the train. I called up Mr. Snell's bookkeeper and told her to meet me at the train in New York City and not to say a word to Mr. Snell about it, but just for her to meet the train, which she did. I got on the train and I never met anyone I knew and I felt sure they were in Chicago and would not come until the next day.

When I went to get off the train, I saw George Kraker, Mr. Lotz, their attorney, a detective, and Charlie Bush, their Kansas City attorney, standing right around me. As George Kraker knew Mr. Snell's bookkeeper, I didn't know what to do, as I preferred that he didn't see mehand this testimony, which was perfectly legal, but it would be better if he didn't. In getting off and going into the Grand Central Station I glanced to my right about 100 feet and saw this bookkeeper. I never went toward her, but went toward the 42nd Street entrance and they all followed me. When I got down to the 42nd Street entrance, I set down my grips and said: "Who is going with me?" The detective said he would accompany me. I said: "All right, but I hope you will be gentleman enough to stay quite a distance behind me." He said he would.

The station was quite crowded. Then I walked back toward the bookkeeper. As I passed her (the detective was back a little ways), I said: "There is a detective following us. Don't walk with me." So I walked down toward the subway trains and as the detective came near, I bought a ticket to go north on the subway. The train pulled in and the door opened. I then let the detective step on first, but as the door began to close, I jumped backwards off the train and the door shut the detective on the train. I went back to the bookkeeper and told her that here was the testimony of Julius Snell which Mr. Brown had sent to him and that it was perfectly legal and right for Mr. Snell to read it over before he went on the stand in the morning. I said: "You take it down to his factory and lay it on his desk. When he comes in in the morning, you tell him there is his testimony and that Mr. Brown sent word that he should read it over and that it was perfectly legal for him to read it. He will ask you who brought it (which he did) and you tell him a messenger brought it. That is the truth, for you are the messenger who brought the testimony."

Mr. Snell read it over and I didn't see him before they began to take testimony the next morning. While they began to take testimony at ten o'clock in the morning in the Bush Terminal Building, Mr. Snell got on the stand. They said: "Mr. Snell, have you read over your testimony?" He said: "Yes, I have." "Where did you get it?" Mr. Brown sent it to me. When I came down to my office this morning, it was lying on my desk." They said: "Who brought it?" "My bookkeeper said a messenger brought it." "When did you see Mr. Sheaffer?" "Just now, when I shook hands with him." "Haven't you seen him since he came in last night?" He said: "I have not." "Didn't he communicate with you over the phone?" "He didn't." They said: "You haven't had a word from him in any way and you haven't communicated with him in any way?" "No, I haven't" (All of which was the truth.) Question: "How do you know that Mr. Sheaffer conceived this patent on a certain day, as you have testified?" (which was about 3½ years ago) "By the fact that I charged him for some models that he had made up on that day." They said: "Are you willing to go down to your factory and show us that entry in your books?" "I am." (This was one of the greatest mistakes they made.) He went down to his factory and got out his books and turned back to the entries made 3½ years ago and there was that entry just as he had described. As they had only until four o'clock that afternoon to take testimony, they were paralyzed. During that 3½ years I got very tired of having a detective with me and following nearly every step I took. But when the decision was rendered, it closed the Kansas City Kraker factory.

I had a boyhood friend by the name of Dr. Bert Hull, of Kansas City. I got a letter from him one day stating that he knew I did not want to break some young fellows who happened to go into the Kraker Pen Company and who knew nothing about the crooked work Kraker had done, and that he wished I would come to Kansas City. I went to Kansas City and found Mr. Blumenthal and his father had everything they had in the company and were now broke and also found a young Mr. Neil who had mortgaged his home for the last appeal. I decided to give these men back their money, or give them Sheaffer stock for their Kraker stock. Blumenthal persuaded me to do the same for Charlie Bush, their attorney, but I was very sorry afterwards that I did. I gave these men in all virtually about \$30,000.

Charles Bush caused us a good deal of trouble afterwards. Mr. Blumenthal never paid anything on his stock and when things didn't look so good, he wouldn't pay. Mr. C. R. Sheaffer and Mr. Waldron did not know all about the circumstances, and one day when I was away they made a new contract with him which they shouldn't have done because I knew all the circumstances and the reasons for making the first contract. After our stock advanced so and Mr. Blumenthal had sold his stock for upwards of \$100,000 that we had virtually given him, he notified us one day that he would vote the stock and do with it just as he pleased. So then we parted company. I learned then that many a time when you would do a fellow a favor it wasn't appreciated. But I have never entirely learned my lesson, for I have done it a few times since then where it still hasn't been appreciated. In most cases, though, men do appreciate the favors you do for them.

I took over the Kansas City factory, but I said that I wasn't going to give the Krakers a penny. They said: "Well, the banks have loaned them 15% on their stock." I said: "All right, we will pay the banks whatever they loaned." I operated this Kansas City factory for several years and then moved it to Fort Madison, Iowa, and made Mr. Blumenthal at that time the New York manager. It was after this that he failed to appreciate what had been done for him in the stock deal.

In the early days of the lever pen it was a novel device, but there was an old lever patent taken out by Barnes of Rockford, Illinois, that I could have bought for a few dollars; but this was one place where my patent attorney advised me wrong. He said: "It isn't worth anything and I wouldn't advise you to buy it." However, it was sold to

the L. E. Waterman Pen Company for about \$100. This patent was the basic for the Waterman Pen Company to make a lever pen. As they were a very large concern, they showed lots of dealers a lever pen before we were able to get to them.

We designed a six-dozen plate glass floor case that I bought at a very low price of \$15 a piece. We went out and displayed these cases and this was the thing that put us on the market, the fact that we had a display and really put the dealer in the fountain pen business. The highest-priced pen we had at that time was \$5. We would go to a dealer and if we couldn't sell him, we would give him a \$4 pen in which he became so interested that when we went back again we sold him our pens.

But the litigation still kept coming on. It seemed that we were the center of attack. As I have related formerly, Mr. Brewster, being one of my best friends and one of the finest men I ever knew, was scared to death we would lose a patent suit, and if we had lost one it would have been very bad; so I never took him along with me on these trips where I had to go. One day I got word that we would be sued in the Brooklyn courts on a certain patent. I thought: "Well, this amounts to nothing. This is one chance for me to take Mr. Brewster along." He had always wondered why I had never taken him along with me on previous trips, as he was one of our vice presidents. I took him to our Chicago lawyer, Frank Brown, and handed this matter over to him to read. Mr. Brown read it and looked up: "They have got you on this and they will stick you for it." I looked over at Mr. Brewster and saw that he had fainted dead away and had fallen off his chair, scaring us all to death. We got cold water and I ran down and got a half-pint of whiskey and braced him up and got him straightened out. He thought that we were ruined. I told him: "You go home and I am going to Brooklyn. You won't hear from me until I get this matter straightened out. Don't tell the ladies, for they will spread the news all over town; and if the news gets out, it will scare our stockholders to death." He did tell the ladies and it was known all over town when I got home.

When I got to Brooklyn I found that the Standard Vulcanite Pen Company had sued us on a Hamilton patent of a bar and that other pen companies had given them \$3,500 to sue us and would give them all they collected from us. Their patent had several years to run and I didn't know we were infringing on their patent, for nearly everybody was using it. Well, it made a pretty bad case. I didn't dare to let anybody know that I

was in New York, not even our own New York Office, for I was afraid the other pen companies would find it out and I couldn't make a settlement. I found that the Standard Vulcanite Pen Company was composed of Mr. Turner, Mr. Hamilton, and Mr. Reeser. I got in touch with Mr. Turner and had him come over to the Vanderbilt Hotel and explained to him that he ought not to take a little company like ours which were doing an honorable business and try to break us. "Well," he said, "The other pen companies are furnishing the money and we get all we make out of it." He said that Mr. Hamilton was angry at us because we never did buy any gold nibs from him. At that time we did not make our own gold nibs, but bought them from the Grieshaber Pen Company of Chicago, Illinois. Well, as the Grieshaber Pen Company had told me that they were losing money on our contract and that they wanted to cancel it, this gave me an opening to tell Mr. Turner if we would enter into a deal that I would buy our gold nibs from them. Mr. Turner said: "We can come to some understanding if the other two partners agree." So the next night, we brought Mr. Reeser over and we convinced him that we should enter into some kind of a contract.

Then after those two agreed, I tried to get them to enter into a contract, but they said they wouldn't do it unless it was agreeable to Mr. Hamilton also. I hated to try to convince Mr. Hamilton because I knew the frame of mind he was in; but it had to be done, so I brought Hamilton over. He was very bitter. He said he didn't like me very well because we had never done any business with him and had given it all to somebody else. He said the other people were furnishing the money for them to sue. It wasn't costing them a cent and they got all they made out of it. It made a pretty stiff proposition to overcome. I said to Mr. Hamilton: "Will you furnish our gold nibs if we buy them from you?" "Will you furnish the same quality of gold nibs at the same price we are now buying them from the Grieshaber Pen Company?" Mr. Hamilton said that he would, but we had to buy so many hundred thousand a year, which was more than I was able to buy and he also demanded that I give him a ten-cent royalty on every pen I made. This would bust us, but that was all he would do.

I saw one ray of light in the fact that he had promised to furnish us the same quality of gold nibs at the same price that we were then buying them from the Grieshaber Pen Company and I thought I could get this in the contract. As I couldn't give him the prices, I thought that would help. We were busted if we signed the contract, and we were busted if we didn't. I said to them: "Have you got a good lawyer?" They said: "Yes." I said: "Let's use your lawyer to make the contract." I knew it would be very difficult to get two lawyers to get the clause in that I wanted.

We wrote up a contract and when we came to the clause that they were to furnish the gold nibs of the same quality at the same price we were getting them from the Grieshaber Pen Company, they asked: "what is the price?" I suggested that I couldn't tell them all the prices and that we write it up that they were to furnish gold nibs of the same quality as the Grieshaber Pen Company had been furnishing us and when I arrived in Fort Madison, I would send them the original invoices and the prices contained in those original invoices were to be entered into the contract. This was agreed to by them and their attorney, and the contract was written up in this manner.

When I got home, I sent them an order, I believe, for \$50,000 worth of pens and they refused to take the order because they said they couldn't make them at the price asked - so that released me from the gold nib part of the contract.

But I still had the ten-cent royalty. However, the business was increasing so much that I was afraid the royalty would be enormous and I didn't know whether we could carry it or not; but I wanted to keep on good terms with him. I said "We will enter into a contract so that you can make a profit on them." (which we did). Every so often we would pay the royalty. I was very bitter toward Hamilton to think that he was bearing down on us the way he was. I wondered what we were going to do because when we got up to 2,000 pens a day we had to pay him \$200 a day royalty. We even had to pay a ten-cent royalty on a dollar pen which we were losing money on, or not at least making money without the royalty.

There was one thing that happened which was very fortunate. We began to receive bills for pens, one for \$1,666.33 and then three or four bills of exactly the same amount, \$1,666.33. I called my son's, C. R. Sheaffer's, attention to this and he agreed that it was impossible to make three or four bunches of nibs of several hundred pens at exactly the same weight and that something was wrong. I told him: "I believe that those fellows are collecting the money in the bank by putting the bills in before they made the pens." I was building my home upon the hill at that time, and one Saturday morning I looked up and saw Mr. Hamilton coming toward the house. I knew then that he was in trouble. He came up and shook hands and said: "Mr. Sheaffer, I have to have \$5,000 before the bank closes today. You know on Saturday it closes at noon and in New York

it closes one hour sooner than it does here, so we have a very short length of time before I have to have this money." I said: "You have come to a bad place to get money today." "But you owe me \$5,000 on royalties." I said "I will owe you on September 1, and I will pay you on that day." "But I have to have money today." "Well," I said, "I am very sorry, but you have come to the wrong place to get it." The result finally was that in less than one-half hour I had give him the \$5,000 and he had cancelled the royalty contract, which saved our company from failure later; for that royalty contract would have grown to \$500 a day before it would have expired. If he had been fair with us, I would have had his royalty contract and I would have helped him during the time of his trouble. But I felt that because of the way he had treated me, I didn't owe him anything and he got just what was coming to him.

It always pays in all cases to be fair. The idea of taking advantage of someone else generally is a boomerang and most frequently ends to the detriment of the person seeking to take advantage.

One reason that I was deterred and had great hesitation about entering the fountain pen business was that I handled a little two-dozen case of Waterman pens that set on top of the show case; and out of our annual business, our pen sales really amounted to nothing. After we started manufacturing and began to drive for the higher-unit sale, the Waterman Pen Company took unquestionably the wrong view. While they had probably 85% of the fountain pen business of the United States and all others had only 15% divided among them, the Waterman people when we put our Lifetime pen on the market for \$8.75 began to advertise that \$2.75 would buy as good a fountain pen as money could buy. This, of course, made it more difficult to market a higher-priced pen when the oldest reliable company advertised in this manner. It shows how little incidents in a business come and go.

In the year 1920, which was a year of short depression, one of our competitors had slumped in business to only a little over one million dollars. It looked as though things were pretty bad for them. But a salesman from Seattle, Washington, came to the factory when the proprietor was in Europe and Asia drumming up foreign business and touring the world, and wanted a colored pen made up. As we get the story, he went into the basement and discovered some old red rubber that the factory were afraid to use because it was brittle, and red rubber is progressively brittle; the older it gets, the more brittle it gets. He had some of this red rubber made up in a red lacquer barrel with black tips on it and took it out and to his surprise it sold like wild-fire. We can't vouch for the authenticity of all the details of what we heard, but as we heard it, when the proprietor learned what they had done, he ordered them to discontinue making the red pen because the breakage would cause them a severe loss. But by the time he got home, their business had been so rehabilitated and the pen was selling so wonderfully well that it brought their business up many fold.

Our Company at that time was working on an indestructible pen. But we also needed a colored pen, so we hired one of the chief engineers of the country, Mr. Hazelquist, to develop Casine so that we could put out a cherry-red pen. We told him, though, not to bring it to

us until he was sure he was right. At the end of eleven months he brought us a beautiful product that took a high luster and that had every prospect of being a splendid success. We took them out and sold them by the thousands. But this was in the winter time and by having a great many men out on the road, we put out thousands of these pens. When hot weather came in the southern countries, the Casine expanded and the rubber sacs all dropped out and the pens were of course worthless. We had to call all of these pens in and stop making a colored pen, which was a great blow to us at that time.

person It shows how a few mistakes can almost ruin a business. The average/has no conception of what a task it is and what a responsibility there is on industry. Industry is making thousands of decisions a day. If they make 500 decisions correct and make ten wrong, they are broke. So if the Government and the men in the Government really knew business and knew the burden that business assumes, they would be more responsive and sympathetic to the great effort of the great majority of American industry, instead of picking out the 5% that are queer and have done wrong. If they would leave the 95% alone that are honest, industrious, and really patriotic, it would be an entirely different picture from what it now is.

We were also working on pyroxylin. We decided on a jade pen, but the DuPont people and the Pyroxylin people told us it was impossible to make pens out of pyroxylin and that this jade pyroxylin was made in cakes like cheese and that it would take it several years for the center of it to cure sufficiently and that it would shrink. The first ones of these we made up shrank so, although the bands were counter-sunk on, that it dropped off in a few weeks from the shrinkage. I went East and got permission to go into one of the factories. I found out that it was six months before they could drill this jade rubber. As the men worked by piece work, their drills would heat when they drilled it when it was less than six months' old. I got a solution to cool the drills and we found out we could drill it in a little over 30 days by using the solution to keep the drills cool. Instead of drilling the cap and leaving a plug in the end, we drilled it clear through. Then we could blow hot air through it and shrink it in a short time and then plug the ends in the barrel and the cap after we had shrunk them. In this way we shrank them as much in 90 days as it would take several years to shrink the old way.

We told the four pyroxylin makers - DuPont Viscoloid Co., Fiberloid (now a division of the Monsanto Chemical Co.), Celluloid, and the Nixon Nitration Works - that if they would give us the exclusive right to two colors, all shades of red and all shades of green, for two or three years, we would spend a million dollars to change the fountain pen industry over from rubber to pyroxylin and that we would give each one of them one-fourth of our business. We finally entered into a signed agreement with all of them. We found, however, that the DuPont Company broke their contract immediately and sold the Parker Pen Company the lacquer-red color and called it burnt orange. It was our intention then to bring suit against the DuPont Company. Their general counsel, Judge Laffey, when we went to see him admitted that they had violated their solemn contract. He frankly said: "Why does this company have a legal department if they don't consult it when doing things of this kind and breaking a contract?" We have to be sued by your or the Parker Pen Company. We understand that your business is increasing and you probably couldn't show the court that your breaking the contract has caused you much damage. If we stopped the other fellow, he could probably show great damage." He spoke the truth, for our business had been growing so rapidly, it would be impossible to show damage; but still that shows what business concerns will do under certain circumstances and how they will fail to live up to their solemn agreements. In about two years, however, we changed the fountain pen industry from rubber to pyroxylin, with the exception of one company. Now, probably 90% of all fountain pens are made out of pyroxylin.

We had one other experience that was very severe. A Young man came along and sold us a formula for ink and worked with us on it. We made it up. It seemed like a wonderful product. It would wash from the hands and the clothing, but was permanent on paper. We tried it out in our offices and had about 200 different people try it - all with the same result, that it was a splendid writing fluid. However, we tried it out where the fountain pens had never had any other writing fluid except ours in them and as long as that was the case, it was a wonderful fluid. But as the base of it was Prussian Blue and as 85% of all other inks had an aniline base, when you mixed Prussian Blue writing fluid with a niline, the Prussian Blue would precipitate and separate; and our writing fluid was no good. As 85% of all inks were of an aniline base, when we got into manufacturing our writing fluid on a large scale, complaints came back by the thousands because everybody that took on our writing fluid probably had some ink with an aniline base in their fountain pens and when ours was mixed with it, our fluid separated and was no good. We had to stop manufacturing writing fluid for over a year and had to go to the dealer and have him break up and pour out all the writing fluid we had sold him and then refund his money to him, which we did willingly.

We started all over again and developed what is now called Skrip today, the best writing fluid, we believe, in the world. Even though the dealers had had this bad experience, they remembered the fact that we didn't ask them to take the loss and that we had refunded their money willingly. But still we had pretty slow work of getting our writing fluid on the market again. Only after we conceived the idea of selling it in 100-pound shipments and paying the freight, did we actually make headway. Then when the dealer bought a 100-pound shipment he would have enough of our writing fluid to make a splendid display and as it was a wonderful fluid, it then began to take hold rather rapidly. In a very few years it was the leading two-ounce seller on the market, and is still the leader today. The fact that a dealer had so much on hand he didn't know what to do with it, he would put it up in pyramids on his counter and with an attractive package this created a great deal of additional sales. We then changed our policy a little bit and the jobber salesman began to sell in small quantities, and our sales began to drop. We have now come back to the 100-pound shipment and the sales have come right back up to where they were formerly. The plans on which you merchandise and the plans on which you create dealer interest, are the ones that succeed, especially in a specialty article.

When we entered the fountain pen field, the total annual sales were about three million dollars; this was caused by the different companies' selling pens priced from \$2.75 down. We have continually worked and urged and maintained our prices and worked for a higher-unit sale until now the total annual fountain pen sales are between 30 and 40 million dollars. We discovered that the gift business of the United States is about \$1,200,000. We saw an opportunity to increase again the sale of gift sets, as 80% of all fountain pens are sold for gifts. When we had done a wonderful business on \$8.75 and \$10 pens, we then wondered how we could further increase the higher-unit sale; so we decided on a beautiful gift box that would go only with the pen and pencil set, and by using the Rule of 4 and the Profit-Sharing Plan for the dealer and urging it for years, we were again enabled to increase the dealer's sale in many cases from \$10 to \$15.

There is a very erroneous thought in the country, that the lower you make prices the more men you employ and the more you increase sales. This is true only to a certain extent. Whenever an item is brought down low enough in price to be within the reach of the masses, then the lower you bring the price the more you will reduce wages and injure business. If everyone built only a one-bathroom house, the plumber would soon go out of business. But if you get everyone to build as good a house as they can afford to build, it increases business, it increases the sale

of lumber, it increases the electric business, the plumbing business, and expands employment in general. If we are to employ all the workers of the United States who want to work and will work, we must quit destroying jobs and begin in the near future to create more jobs.

The public has a definite duty in this matter. A certain percentage of the people are producers, a certain percentage middlemen, a certain percentage white collar workers - but we are all consumers. As consumers, if we purchase the best article we can afford to buy, there will be no trouble about everybody's being given employment. If the Government will leave honest private industry alone and let them initiate the many conveniences which will be conceived and allow inventors to receive the reward of their inventions so that they will continue to create new things, that will keep on expanding industry and there will be no trouble about employment. It isn't over-production we are troubled with; it is under-consumption. If every child had all the milk he needed and if every person had all the nourishing food he needed, we would have hardly enough to go around.

If the consumer does not do his full duty, then there is too much money hoarded away. I don't mean to say that people ought not to save for a rainy day, but hoarding and saving for a rainy day are quite different. If a person goes into a store and buys a dollar watch on which the labor receives the lowest pay when he could afford to buy a \$50 watch, then the Government in order to keep people employed must take away a large portion of the \$49 and give it to the unemployed, many times to sweep leaves across the city streets, and on which probably 40% is wasted through Government mismanagement. If the purchaser had bought the \$50 watch - the watch factory already had the machinery and equipment - then most of the additional 49 dollars would go to employing good mechanics who made this watch and making them good Americans by having employment. The purchaser in the latter case would be out very little more money, for he would be giving good mechanics employment at good wages and thus help make good American citizens out of them; while in the former case he would be out the same amount of money, but would be helping to make people hoodlums by forcing them to sweep leaves across the city streets. Therefore, it is very important that the people be educated. If our democracy is to continue to live, everyone must do his best to help make the best Government and as private citizens and consumers, they must do their utmost to expand employment.

A political democracy probably cannot succeed in the long run, for it rewards the man who does the worst job. It rewards the man according to his political pull and the number of votes he gets, but not according to the good job he does. If a democracy of merit could be established where the good deeds were rewarded and the bad deeds punished, we would have a much better government. There is a system which would take long patience and a world of training that could be adopted, but it would take too long to outline it at this time.

There is a great deal said that is erroneous about technology and the labor-saving machines causing unemployment. As far as I have investigated, the contrary is true. I have gone to many companies which are very successful. They have brought many labor-saving devices into existence and in every case they have increased employment and wages many fold. Take the case of the Eastman Kodak Company. About a year ago I was in Rochester, New York, with Mr. Lovejoy, the president, and we were looking down from their main office building at a construction crew working on an addition to the building. Mr. Lovejoy said: "Do you see that crew at work?" I said: "Yes." "That crew has either been building a new factory building or an addition to a factory building for the last fifteen years; they have never been idle during all that time." I said to him: "How many men did you have fifteen years ago?" "About one thousand." "How many do you employ today?" "Fifteen thousand." "How do your wages per man today compare with your wages per man fifteen years ago, approximately?" "I would have to go to the figures to find out definitely, but I'm quite sure that it would be two or three times as much per man as it was fifteen years ago." Here is a very reliable and wonderful firm which has put in hundreds of labor-saving machines and still they have multiplied their number of employees by 15 and their wages by 2 or 3.

Take our own Company, for instance. Twenty-six years ago, we had seven people working for us. The prevailing wage for girls in Fort Madison at that time was from \$3 to \$5 per week. In the last 26 years we have put in many labor-saving machines until today we have between 1,000 and 1100 employees. We have labor-saving machines where one girl does the work that 30 people did before in smoothing pens. Still, instead of the girls' getting from \$3 to \$5 per week, they get many many times that amount now. Instead of working in a little crowded room, they are working in an air-conditioned factory. Most of them have employment 12 months in the year.

No one has had to buy our product, but we have continually preached for the public to buy the best they could afford to buy. When the value of gold was changed to \$35 an ounce, we lost 15 cents on every dollar pen we made. But we believe that the public is entitled to a dollar pen if we could make it. The man who can afford to buy only a dollar pen is entitled to the best he can buy for one dollar. Under the system our employees worked, they would receive a smaller wage for making the dollar pen. We therefore felt that it would be better for us to take a loss rather than have them work for less money on the dollar pen.

Let us see what happened when we sold the dollar pen. Our wages were lower, the volume of our sales was lower, the salesman who sold the pen received less wages, the salespeople of the dealer who was operating on the profit-sharing plan received less wages because they did not get a bonus for selling a dollar pen, and the customer who bought the dollar pen got the best dollar pen he was able to buy and which he was entitled to.

No one had to buy the \$10 pen. When a desire was created in the customer's mind to buy a \$10 pen, and he could afford to pay \$10 for a pen, immediately the wages in the factory were raised, the wages of the salesmen were raised, the dollar volume of our Company increased, the dollar volume of our retailers increased, if the dealer was operating on the profit-sharing plan the salaries of his salespeople increased. Now, was it fair to the customer who paid \$10 for his pen? We maintain that it was, for the \$10 pen would outlast ten \$1 pens; and instead of having ten cheap pens, the customer would always have the best pen there was to use. If we made only \$1 pens, we wouldn't expand employment because wages would be too low. But when we make \$10 pens, our factory workers make higher wages so that they are able to spend more money; and the spending of more money makes it necessary for more people to be employed to make the articles that the higher wages allowed our workers to buy. Therefore, in making the higher-unit sale, you not only raise wages but you expand employment - which is an endless chain.

If the Government would leave honest industry alone and leave private initiative that is constructive alone; if the Government would let industry expand and increase the unit sale which in turn increases wages and employment; and if they would preach to the consumer to buy the best he can afford to buy, we would soon have an annual volume of business of ninety billion dollars. When we reach the ninety billion

dollar mark, everybody can have a job at good wages. In this scheme of things we must take the producer into consideration, the middleman into consideration - in fact, everyone into consideration - and be fair to all. Lots of people will agree that jewelry is a luxury and is unnecessary; but if we would destroy the jewelry business, we would throw thousands of people out of work and these people whom we had thrown out of work would have to go on relief. The more jewelry, the more clothing, the more of every convenience that is sold, the better and happier and more prosperous this country will be. Whenever we tax the people who build fine homes and who own large estates so heavily that they must close them down or must dispose of them altogether, we throw many people out of positions who have been hired to care for these homes and estates and force them to take Government relief. The quicker this country reverses itself and lets alone everybody who is creating an honest job and encourages him to do so, instead of trying to take everything away from those who are creating honest jobs and giving the money to the Government to waste, then we will be on the road to real prosperity.

In my early life, I believed everybody to be honest and trusted and took everybody's word. But when I sold pianos and got the farmers' notes which were almost universally good because we looked them up to see that they were, I took notes to the bank and borrowed money on them and left the notes as collateral security. When the notes were paid, the bank was supposed to credit the amount that was paid on the notes against our note. As there was considerable collateral above our note and there were many thousands of dollars worth of those notes as collateral, and as I knew that the banker claimed to be a great friend of mine and knew how hard we were struggling to make a living and a little money, I just assumed that he was thoroughly honest and I failed to make a list of the notes. As my sister was working in the bank at the time, I thought that everything would have to go perfectly straight.

I had sold a piano to Judge S. S. Carruthers and had taken a note against Johnny Langenstein, blacksmith and wagon maker, to the amount of \$300 for payment of the piano. One day Judge Carruthers passed the store and came in and told me that Johnny Langenstein had paid his \$300 note that day. The next day I happened to be in the bank and asked my sister to let me see our note and she did, and I found that this \$300 had not been credited on our note but had been paid to this banker friend of mine. I asked her to go and see if the books balanced on that day. She came back and told me the books balanced. I called my banker friend and asked him about it. He said he forgot to credit it on the note, but I said: "How could your books balance if you forgot to credit it on the note?" I told him to give me those notes so that I could list them and keep track of this matter myself, and that that looked very bad to me.

I was dumbfounded to think that a man who was rich and who claimed to be such a great friend and who knew the circumstances would do such a thing. I resolved from that day on to make my contracts and my dealings so everyone would have to treat me fairly; for I knew if I could make everyone treat me fairly, I believed I could trust myself to be fair to the other fellow. No matter how honest I thought a man was after that or anyone I was dealing with, I made the deal just so that they couldn't possibly be dishonest with me. I believe that is the way that everyone should deal. An honest person doesn't mind being watched, and a dishonest person ought to be.

In selling pianos, we came across many peculiar circumstances and became quite well acquainted with all the inner workings of the life of the average family to whom we sold pianos and organs. We used to have competition from a firm by the name of Leyhe in Lancaster, Missouri, who were quite active in the piano business. Mr. J. J. Ethel was working for us at that time. He took a piano down toward the Missouri line. The next day he came back and wanted me to go with him, as the Leyhes were up there giving him a pretty strong fight. We had our long wagon that would hold two organs or one piano. Even though he had failed to sell the one organ that he took the day before, we took two more as we had two more prospects, and went down the next day. We didn't get home until four o'clock in the morning; however, we cleaned up the sales of three organs in that one day.

The last one was a rather peculiar sale and it will show how families get disturbed over the buying of an organ. We reached the home of Byron Lamb, who was pretty close with money and a quite well-to-do farmer, but he wanted to spend his money generally for the things on the farm and didn't worry so much about the musical education of his family. Mrs. Lamb urged Mr. Lamb very hard to buy this organ. Finally about midnight after she had gotten angry at her husband and had gone upstairs, we sold him the organ. When she found out that he had bought the organ, she got more angry than ever and came downstairs and said he couldn't buy it. If he would buy the organ, he would harp about it the rest of his life and that she would rather not have an organ and have him harp about it. It took all the ingenuity that Mr. Ethel and I could muster.

We got them separated in separate rooms, John talking to one of them and I talking to the other. Finally, about two o'clock in the morning we got them to agree. So we were fully ten miles from home and we had just about spent the night making this last sale, but we felt pretty good over having accomplished so much in one day.

People of today can't imagine that it would take us two hours to go ten miles; but if they could have seen some of the roads of those days, they would have considered five miles an hour a wonderful pace. I have seen in the town of Bloomfield four horses hitched to an empty wagon with virtually no load at all and the mud collected in between

the spokes of the wheels until there was a solid mass of mud from the hubs of the wheels to the tires, not a spoke visible and the mud widening out to the width of the hubs. In those days the circuses all came over land. I can remember very well Robinson's Circus that was delayed on account of mud and coming, I believe, from Fort Madison to Bloomfield, Iowa. They travelled in the night. When they would get stuck in the mud, they would get an elephant, and sometimes two of them, and put them behind the wagons and they would virtually lift while the teams were pulling the wheels out of the mud hole. It was our job then to carry water to the elephants and help in one way or the other to get a ticket into the show. Now we put up with the clay roads in the spring of the year when the frost went out of the ground is almost a miracle, for the wagon tracks would wear so deep that the hubs would come down to the ground in some places. Business would be almost at a standstill until the frost got out and the mud dried up.

In my observations during the last fifty years, I have found that as a rule men make their money in their own businesses which they attend to and universally their losses are in some outside investment which somebody else manages. If business men would just make it a rule to invest their money in their own businesses or in something that they can watch very closely and have control over, or invest their money in good dividend-paying stocks that are listed on the stock exchange and where you get an audited report quarterly or semi-annually and where if there is any change in the condition of the business they can immediately invest in old and tried dividend-paying stocks that have been paying dividends for a long period of time and have a record of sound management, while in the new enterprises the prospects look as good but they are untried and quite a gamble.

When bicycles, along back in '94 and '95 became the rage, I endeavored to get in on the ground floor so that we could make some money out of the bicycle business. I finally went to Ames and Frost in Chicago who manufactured the Imperial bicycle and contracted to buy \$125 bicycles. By agreeing to buy 50, I got a jobber's price of \$50 and I sold the machines for \$100. I had sold 49 of the machines and had one left. I had used this machine a little for a rental machine. The price broke all at once and in '95 machines that were selling at \$125 dropped to \$25, but I was fortunate enough to have sold everyone of the bicycles except this one machine. I was very anxious to get rid of it.

* Line omitted: all their holdings; but not invest it in new enterprises for they can

A young man by the name of Sammy Barnett whose credit I knew wasn't very good but whose father was a rich farmer down by Savannah in the southern part of the county, bought my last bicycle. I sold Sammy this bicycle for \$35 and took a regular mortgage note that allowed attorney's fees, but I failed to record the lease note. Sammy got on his bicycle one day and rode down to Lancaster, Missouri, as he lived about half way between Bloomfield and Lancaster. A clothing man down there saw him with the bicycle. As Sammy owed him for clothing, the clothing man levied on the bicycle, and took it, sold it, and collected for his clothing. As it was in Missouri, I had no recourse.

This young Sammy was rather a sort of smart-aleck. Quite sometime after the clothing merchant had taken his bicycle away from Sammy, he came into the store. As he had sold a bunch of hogs, he had a big roll of money. At the time, I was waiting on a customer selling a watch. Sammy just walked up to me and pulled out this roll of money and said: "Do you see that?" "Yes." "You will never get a damn cent of it!" Then he stuck the roll of money back into his pocket and strode out of the store.

Well, it was rather laughable, but I took the note to John Scarborough, an attorney; the note had several years' interest on it and we added the attorney's fees. We sued and got judgment and took a transcript so that if his father did pass away, any land that he inherited, it would be a lien against it. Several years later, I don't remember just now many, I noticed in the paper that his father was very sick and was expected to die. Sammy, of course, began to think that I was going to collect the money in full if his father passed away. He came into the store one day and asked me to figure up that mortgage to see just how much he owed on it. I did. That \$35 bicycle, the interest, attorney's fees, and all the costs amounted to \$85. Sammy said: "I will give you \$65 for the note." I said: "It is your note." He paid me the \$65 in cash. In a few days his father was much better and got well, and had the \$65. I don't remember when he did pass away, as I moved away from the county before that time. But it did pay me to follow this through. So I finally wound up my bicycle business with a good fine profit; but for years they were as dead as a door nail and you could buy them from \$15 to \$20; the bottom was clear out.

As we were having a great deal of patent litigation, our stockholders became very disturbed with any announcement of patent litigation. Things were going along rather serenely, when one evening the paper came out with an announcement that the W. A. Sheaffer Pen Company were sued for one million dollars by Brown and Bigelow Company of St. Paul, Minnesota on a pencil patent. We had no idea or notice in the world of this suit and it naturally scared the bankers nearly to death, especially Mr. Brewster and Mr. Joe Pollard. I called Frank Brown over the phone and had him go to Washington, D. C. at once and make a thorough search of pencil patents, which he did. As soon as he made it, he cataloged it and sent it to me and told me we had them licked to a standstill. Brown and Bigelow were probably worth twenty million dollars and I knew that even if we won the suit, it would be a terrible strain and would cost us a lot of money and time away from the business.

When I got the search, I resolved to go to St. Paul and have a talk with Mr. Bigelow. Bigelow was the same man who later was sent to a federal prison for false returns on his income tax and while in prison he became very friendly with another prisoner. When they were both out of prison, he took this other prisoner to St. Paul and finally made him manager of the company, and at this time he is virtually owner of it. The men who really made the business were almost ignored and treated very unfairly.

When I called a conference and told our folks what I intended to do, they thought I was crazy. They said: "If you have them licked and you go up to St. Paul, they will say: 'Why did you come up here if you really have us licked?'" But I believed that I could convince them that they could be beaten in this law suit; and by convincing them of this fact, thereby save both of us lots of time and money. If they wanted to, they could fight for years and make it very uncomfortable for us at that time. So I got on the train and went to St. Paul.

They had a very wonderful plant outside of St. Paul. I met the superintendent, Mr. Christofecht. He informed me that Mr. Bigelow wasn't in. I told him what my mission was and his answer was just what everybody said it would be: "If you have us whipped, why didn't you stay home instead of coming to us?" I told him that I didn't believe they wanted to waste a lot of money and we didn't either, and I felt sure we would win this suit. He said: "We have our own patent attorney whom we employ by the year and it would not cost us as much as

it would you." I said it would cost them plenty. I said: "It will cost us both a lot." He said: "Would you mind if I sent for our attorney, Mr. Fisher, and let him look over your search?" I said: "No." He brought the attorney over to the room. I said to Mr. Fisher: "Have you a cross patent in your file?" He began to look and look and finally he found one; but as he didn't have his papers in good condition, he did not make a very good impression upon Mr. Christofecht. I said: "But you haven't the right cross patent." I just reached in my little folder where they were all indexed and said: "Read this." As I watched him read it, I could see how surprised and how red he got; but he was pretty smooth. After he read it through, he said. "I don't see that that decides anything." "I said: "Yes, I think you do." He and Mr. Christofecht went out into the other room and had a long conference. When they came back, they said: "Did you say you wanted to see Mr. Bigelow?" I said: "Yes, that is whom I came up to see." They went out again and must have telephoned Bigelow, for after awhile they came back into the room and said: "You can see Mr. Bigelow at ten o'clock in the morning."

At ten o'clock the next morning, I went into Mr. Bigelow's office and he said: "Just what do you want?" I told him that I wanted him to withdraw his suit and pay his attorney's cost. He said: "What do I gain by doing so?" "You will save thousands of dollars and an awfully good licking. If that is not enough, go ahead." He said: "Do you know what our plan is? When we find out that a younger concern takes out a patent, we bring suit, whether our patent will win or not. We keep it in the courts until we wear them out on account of the great expenditure." I said: "It's a damnable policy! Do you think you can wear us out?" He said: "I don't know. You have had a pretty good record of fighting." He went out into the other room, and with Mr. Christofecht and Mr. Fisher, they had another long conference. When he came back he said: "If you will give me this search that you have, I will withdraw the suit and pay our attorney and you pay yours." "No," I said, "I won't give you the search. Whom do you want to use it against?" He said: "I want to use it against George Kraker." I said: "He is about the only man in the world I would let you use it against." So we settled our case.

I had told George Kraker when he tricked me that if he would decide to be an honest man, I would let up on him; but he had never told me he would give up his dishonest ways, so I lent this search to Mr. Bigelow so that he could bring a patent suit against George Kraker. Later I understood that Kraker lost a lot of money to the Minnesda Pen Company and there were some circumstances that it isn't necessary to relate here because I can't prove them. But it showed by going to St. Paul, I avoided the starting of a suit that might have lasted for over a period of four or five years. But it was a dubious undertaking and looked as though it would be almost impossible to accomplish anything with a man like Bigelow.

There came a time in our business when we wanted to make our holders and as Julius Snell was a fine man, I tried my best to buy his little holder factory on Franklin Street in New York City and move him and his family to Fort Madison, Iowa. I prevailed on him in every way I could, but I couldn't get him to come. He afterwards got some men to go in with him and put a pen that they had on the market. They failed and lost all of his money. I was very sorry indeed to see this because he was a fine type of man and thoroughly honorable.

When the war broke out in 1914, he had only been making holders for us about a year and a half, but I became attached to him. He came out to Fort Madison one day and told me that his aunt in Paris had sent him and his family round-trip tickets to come and see her and that he would be back about the first of August. He said he couldn't go unless I would agree to keep his payroll going for those two months. I told him I would do it, as we took most of the holders that he made. The war broke out the last of July and tied him up in France so that he couldn't get home. Times got very bad at home and we were pinched for money. I had gone down and kept his factory going three days a week and kept his organization intact. When he came back and found out that they had been running only three days a week, he said: "Why didn't you keep my factory running six days?" I told him that he ought to be thankful for those three days because I had taken all the money to do that. He afterwards found out how difficult it was and was sorry that he had said anything. We then organized our own holder factory and, of course, he eventually lost our holder business.

There then came a time a little later when we wanted to make our gold nibs and it was a very important thing that we get the right man. There were only three men in the United States who were the type of men I would have. One was Tommy Moore who managed the gold nib department of the Boston Safety Pen Company of Boston. Another one was Mr. Aiken who was 82 years of age. The third one was Winfield Kay of Kay and Smith, Jersey City, New Jersey.

I went to Boston and wasn't there a week before I had an agreement with Tommy Moore to move his family to Fort Madison, as the Boston Safety Pen Company had been bought by the Wahl Pen Company of Chicago, Illinois; so I wasn't taking Moore away from his old employers.

At the end of the week everything, I thought, was already. He came to me the next morning and said: "I have decided not to go."

I then got on a train and went to Jersey City. Kay and Smith had a gold nib factory at the back part of a hardware store. They were making gold nibs to ship to France and gold nibs had to be a special 16K nib or they could not be received into France. The French government had put a clamp down on purchasing gold nibs as the war was in progress and Mr. Kay and Mr. Smith were having a pretty hard time. I had learned that Mr. Kay was a very honorable man and I had decided to get him to move to Fort Madison if possible. I went in and talked to him about it. He said: "There is no chance in the world. Mrs. Kay won't go." I said: "How do you know she won't go?" He said: "The Swan Fountain Pen Company wanted me to go to Toronto, Canada, and she wouldn't go up there. She has so many friends in the catholic church and is so happy with her friends that she wouldn't think of leaving them." I said: "Let's go out to your home and let me talk with Mrs. Kay." We went out and in a little modest home we found Mrs. Kay down on the floor cutting out dresses for their two little girls. She was a very fine little woman. I told her what I had come to talk about, but she told me very firmly that she wouldn't go to Fort Madison and leave her friends. I said: "Let's not talk about it any more now, but Thursday night you and Mr. Kay and your two children come over to the Vanderbilt Hotel in New York City and have dinner and talk this over then. You don't have to go to Iowa if you don't want to."

This was on a Monday. I went back and asked Mr. Kay: "How much money are you taking home a week?" Only \$25; probably less from now on." "Then when you present your arguments to Mrs. Kay, you tell her if she compels you to stay in Jersey City she must accept smilingly and willingly whatever you can make wherever she compels you to stay; and if you come home with \$15 a week, she must be satisfied with it." I didn't care to take Smith with me, but Kay wanted Smith to come also. "What will we do with our factory?" "I will buy it and I will pay you invoice price for it. (I didn't know what machinery was worth as we were not making gold nibs, but I knew he was thoroughly honest.) I will start you and Mr. Smith in at \$9.00 a week each. I will sell you \$5,000 worth of Sheaffer Pen Stock that you can pay for out of the profits you will receive on this stock, provided you stay with me. If you give up your job, you give up the stock."

Mr. and Mrs. Smith and the Kays came over to the Vanderbilt Hotel on Thursday evening and they began to ask questions. The children were also there. I said: "Well, we will not talk a lot until we have had our dinner." I found that people were always in a better mood after they had had a good meal. We had a very nice dinner. Mrs. Kay asked me: "Are there any catholic churches in Fort Madison?" I said: "Yes, we have three large catholic churches." Mrs. Smith asked: "Do you have any moving picture shows in Fort Madison?" I said: "Yes, we have Mary Pickford and Marguerite Clark with every picture." Even though Mrs. Smith was a church member, I could see that she liked the bright lights a little bit. Mrs. Kay said: "You know, we have a peculiar situation in our family. Mr. Kay is a strong mason and I am a strong catholic." I said: "I believe we can handle that situation. As Father Zaizer formerly was a Presbyterian minister, he ought to be able to handle a mason and catholic together." They both laughed and seemed to think that it might be a good arrangement. The children wanted to know what kind of schools we had, and I told them. I said: "You can have daddy home at noon as well as in the morning and evening. You can have nice grass in your yard (they had no grass in their yard in Jersey City) and a nice place to play." Of course, I made it as it was. Finally the decision was to go.

After they moved to Fort Madison, Mrs. Kay afterwards told me she cried for nearly six months; but after she had been there a few years, you couldn't have hired her to go back. But Smith's wife, after she was in Fort Madison for several months, wanted to go back to the bright lights. Mr. Smith gave up his \$5,000 worth of Sheaffer stock and went back. Mr. Kay stayed. I understand that Mr. Smith is working today for about \$35 a week.

Mr. Kay bought more stock and stayed with us and trained nearly everybody in our gold nib department. He was one of the most loyal men I ever knew. He was one of the most prominent citizens in Fort Madison and was a member of the City Council nearly continually for ten or fifteen years. He passed away about six months ago. We cancelled at different times about \$9,000 that he owed on the stock he bought. We arranged to have his widow out of debt after he passed away and with an income of \$200 a month. (We feel that it was our duty to make this arrangement on account of the great loyalty of Mr. Kay.) This arrangement leaves Mrs. Kay comfortably fixed and with several thousand dollars in money and with a permanent income of \$200 a month.

Many peculiar circumstances came up in selling musical instruments. There was a family by the name of Killwilling down by Killwilling, Missouri. Everybody had tried to sell them an organ and had failed. We took a very fine organ with a large canopy top, and John Ethel and I went down and tried our luck with Mr. Killwilling. His answer to us was: "Go into the house and if you can sell Mrs. Killwilling, I will sign the note." We went into the house and after a very hard time we sold her the organ and took in her old organ as part trade. We took the old organ out and put it in the long piano wagon, which was so long that it was hard to back out and turn around in some small places. Mrs. Killwilling came out and said: "We have decided to trade back." John Ethel became so excited that in turning the wagon around, he turned it over and mashed her old organ. We righted the wagon and drove away. John kept looking back as if he expected to see the sheriff coming after us with a shotgun. When the note became due, Killwilling paid for their organ without any trouble.

In this case, it shows how you can be fooled by a customer. Ab Downing, the superintendent of the county farm, was a very shrewd and a very close trader. I had never made any profit on hardly anything I had sold him over a period of many years. His son was studying to be a music teacher and they had decided to trade their Packard organ which I had sold them without profit for a piano. I didn't have the kind of piano I wanted to take out. It was at the time that Kincart and O'Neill were in the neighborhood and I heard that they would be there a certain day. I had ordered my piano from Chicago and if I waited until the freight train got into Bloomfield, I couldn't get out there until the next day and Kincart and O'Neill would be there and we would have a bad fight on our hands; and I knew with this shrewd trader there would be nothing in it for either of us.

I telegraphed the superintendent of the KC road, whom I knew very well, and I got permission to stop the train out near the county farm. I backed up to this freight car and slid it right out of the car and put it into our piano wagon and went over to the county farm and wanted to put it in the house. Ab Downing said: "No, if you say it is a good piano, I will take your word for it, providing you will take in a team of horses that I have and the organ." I felt sure that I was going to have to make a big cut and I prepared for it. The boy and his wife didn't like the thought of giving up their driving team because they went to town a great deal and lived about five miles out of town; but Downing said: "You either put in the team, or no trade." I didn't know whether I was getting skinned on the horses or not, but I had a good

profit on the piano. To my great surprise, Downing didn't ask me to take one cent off. I put the piano in the house and took the team to town. As I drove into the livery barn, a buyer stepped up and offered \$122.50 for the team that I had just allowed \$125 for; so I got within \$2.50 for what I had allowed for the horses and made up for some of the sales that I had sold him virtually without profit in the 20 years before. I never yet could understand why even on a dollar article he would whittle down to the last penny, while on the highest - priced article he bought it sight unseen and never asked me to take a nickel off the price. But after that, he soon changed back into his former position and I had to sell him stuff without profit if I sold him.

As the bottom of the depression arrived in 1932 and hundreds of people were out of work, everyone, although he might be nearly broke himself, as long as he had any money his thoughts were about giving men work. We had built our home on High Point, Fort Madison, Iowa. As we passed back and forth between our home and the business district, we saw a large hard maple tree on the north side of the road on the north hillside which belonged to Will Hitch. This tree stood out alone in the field; it was beautiful in symmetry and was approximately 100 years old.

I had had a fine elm tree on the west side of my home which was about 2½ feet in diameter and probably about as old as the large hard maple tree in Will Hitch's field. But the Davey people came along and persuaded me to let them work on the tree. They had first worked on the trees in the parks down town; those very trees they worked on developed elm blight, but I didn't know that when they began to work on my elm tree. When they came to High Point the second time to work on the elm tree, it was looking as beautiful as I had ever seen it. I told the Davey people that I didn't want the tree disturbed, but they persuaded me that they ought to do a little trimming. In sixty days after they had worked on it, the tree was dead.

I inquired of them whether or not they sterilized their tools. They told me that they didn't. In other words, they did with their tools as they went from one section of the country to the other what the doctor would do if he operated on a patient and failed to sterilize his instruments and then operated on another patient with these same germ-laden instruments. It was inconceivable to me that a great organization like the Davey people who travelled over the entire country working on all kinds of trees would fail to take the precaution of sterilizing their tools when they worked on a healthy tree. It seemed to me that the spread of elm blight was greatly hastened and made much worse because the Davey people failed to sterilize their tools, for the trees which died first were always the ones they had worked on first. The trees in the country which they did not work on didn't show signs of the blight until several years later. But finally the blight spread to nearly all of our good elm trees. I never let the Davey people work on another of my trees and told them that they had killed the only trees which were worthwhile to work on.

I had to get the tree in the ground by at least the 10th or 15th of April so that I could put water on it because it would have to have a world of water in order to grow. When it was over in the middle of Will Hitch's field and what frost there was in the ground was coming out, I got a weather report that on Saturday night there would be heavy rain which might turn into snow. I knew with this plowed ground soft that if we got in the mud our chances of getting this tree out of the field were very slight. This was on Thursday, as I remember, and I told the men that if they would get that tree over on the cement road by Saturday night, I would give each one of them a \$10 pen; there were forty men. The men really wanted those pens and they worked very hard.

We had another power line which we had to go through. We got the tree by four o'clock Saturday evening right up against this power line. I then told the men to go home and come back Monday morning. On Monday morning we had to have about sixty men there; as the Keokuk men had to be there for the power lines; the telephone men had to be there for the telephone lines; and the Fort Madison electric men had to be there on account of their lines. I had to cut these wires and I didn't want to keep people out of heat and light longer than thirty minutes. The next morning it rained very hard and then turned into snow.

We had about six inches of snow on the ground on Monday morning. Sixty men came and we worked from eight o'clock until half-past nine getting the snow and everything already to start. The first thing that was done each morning was the building of a fire in the boiler by the engineer an hour before the men began to work as a rule. I paid no attention to this part of the work. After we had shovelled for about an hour and a half and were ready to start, I told the men to get ready to cut the wires. Just as they were about to cut the wires, the engineer said: "There is no fire in the boiler." I said: "Why haven't you a fire in the boiler?" He said: "The hose was frozen." I said: "Why didn't you thaw it out and tell me two hours and a half ago?" He had no answer. I guess I swore quite considerably. I finally sent them all home because it had begun to turn warmer and rain again.

In about an hour the contractors came down to the office and said they were going to quit. I asked them what was the matter. They said that they didn't like the way I talked to them. "You liked the

way I talked to you about as well as you treated me. I had sixty men working there for an hour and one-half and your engineer and fireman have always had a fire in the boiler and they knew how important it was this morning to have everything ready. To go two hours and a half without saying a word to me about the boiler seemed like perfect nonsense. They got just what was coming to them." They said they were going to quit. I said: "You have about \$500 worth of equipment under the tree. How are you going to get it out? You can't cut the tree up to get your equipment out. If you want to save your equipment, you will have to move that tree to its destination." They went out and went into a huddle and came back and said they would go back to work.

In a few days they came back and we moved the tree over ready to put it in the ground. I had a hole dug for it 70 feet across and 8 feet deep. The question was how to lay that ball of dirt down into that hole. I found that I could save money by burying the timbers under the tree instead of taking them out. I forget exactly what I had to pay for the timbers, but it was between three or four hundred dollars. Then it took thirty jack screws on a side at one time to let each side of the tree down. There had to be thirty men on these jack screws. We built a trestle across the hole and then we built another trestle at each end of the tips of the timbers. I tried to find out just how much loose dirt would settle with a weight of 150 tons on it; but I couldn't find any railroad man or anybody who could give me the least idea. When we finally let the tree down on the soft dirt, it was very important that we get it at the right spot. So we had our trestle loose at each side of the tree and we filled the center under the tree which was several feet above the top of the ground full of dirt. Then we began to take out the jacks and let the tree down about one foot each time. We had to leave the south side of the dirt ball four feet higher than the north side because in its original position that was the way it grew. When we got it down in the ground, the ground was about level and the south side of the tree stood out of the ground about two feet; we had to fill in the other side about two feet in order to have the tree stand perpendicular.

When we let the tree down for the last time, the great problem was to get thirty men to turn the jacks and jerk them out before the tree settled into the ground. We lectured the men quite awhile and had them practice doing it a little before we got to the last spot. Fortunately, the men turned those thirty jack screws and jerked them out just as the tree was settling down; if they hadn't done this, we would have had to jack the tree up again in order to get them out.

When we finally settled the tree into its final place, we were approximately where we wanted to be. It was almost perfect. We surely had splendid luck in that respect. I am enclosing two pictures of the tree with this article; one taken before the tree was in the ground; the other, taken about forty days later when the tree was out in full leaf.

The thing which really saved the tree was my decision to leave the timbers underneath the dirt ball. I ran a 1½" pipe down between the two center timbers and put a "1" orit and ran it out on top of the ground. When we wanted to water the tree, we would turn on the pressure and fill the ground down below the tree full of water; and when the water began to ooze out the top of the ground, then we knew it was thoroughly soaked. I don't believe it would have been possible to get the water down deep enough into the ground and to water it enough if we had not left the timbers under the tree.

While I had started out on this undertaking to give men work, it looked as though for awhile I would be the fellow who would be seeking work; for the panic was getting steadily worse and I had spent thousands of dollars moving the tree. I have never told the exact amount spent on the tree and I guess there is no reason for doing it now. At this writing the tree is living, and this is being written seven years later. You can get some idea of what an undertaking it was from the picture. Needless to say, it was one of the hardest jobs and one of the most baffling I had ever undertaken.

After nearly fifty years of merchandising and working to increase the unit sale and to sell the better merchandise which cost the customer more, I became very interested in an investigation. About five years ago when I was in California for the winter, I went to an annual Iowa picnic that was held in Lincoln Park. They had each county of the State of Iowa laid out in the same position that it was located on the map. I took Mrs. Sheaffer with me and went to Davis County. As there were over 100,000 people at this picnic - almost all of them were retired Iowa farmers - I no more arrived in Davis County than some retired farmer would come up and say to me: "Are you Walter Sheaffer?" I would say: "Yes." He would say: "Here's a Hamilton watch I bought from you 45 years ago. It is still running perfectly." As I stayed there for quite a long

time, one retired farmer after another would come up and make the same inquiry and invariably would pull out a Hamilton watch and tell the same story that it had been running perfectly for 45 years. While selling them a watch from \$14 to \$25, instead of selling them a \$3.95 watch on which we would lose 30 cents, we not only paid the mortgage off on the jewelry store but we also benefitted the farmer and sold him a watch which would last him a lifetime and would keep good time during the entire period. It proved conclusively that constructive merchandising is just as beneficial to the purchaser as it is to the merchant. We had filled this county full of good watches on which we made a fair margin of profit. In the other counties the jewelers tried to compete with Montgomery Ward and sold the people watches which were cheap, and as a result of doing this they were put out of business and their customers were not benefitted.

This experience in retail selling was one of our reasons when I entered the fountain pen field of making every endeavor we could to make the best merchandise we knew how to make and charge a fair price for it. By so doing, we benefitted the person who purchased it, the salesperson who sold it, the dealer who bought it and sold it, the salesman on the road, our factory employees, and our Company - a continuous chain of expanded employment and better wages. If the consumers of the United States, and that means everyone in the country, could only realize the great good they could do to humanity by purchasing the best articles they could buy, instead of the cheapest; after while they would realize what a benefit it was to employment and to our country in general.

I found that there are many factors in a business that make or unmake a product. Sometimes a product of quality fails on account of peculiar circumstances. Some years ago the Mason Hammond Company devised a tuning pin. A hole was bored in an extended flange and the pin was put through this hole with threads on it and then a cap to it was put on the top, so that in tuning the piano you could just turn this nut down and draw the string up just as much as you desired. This did away with pin slipping and pianos getting unduly out of tune.

The piano tuners, of course, did not like this device and they did not know how to handle it well. As the string was drawn over an agraffe bar in pulling it up, unless the key was hammered very hard the string had a tendency to sharpen after the tuner left. On account of the

propaganda put out by the tuners, this piano company had to go back to the old system of tuning, which was not nearly so good.

Probably one thing which helped to cause the trouble was that if they had a roller agraffe bar in which the string would run over a roller instead of being drug by friction over a bar, this tendency would not have occurred. I sold pianos of this make years ago which would stay in tune for a year if they were properly tuned and the string properly hammered with the key while tuning. So many good things, if they are not properly explained and if they are not properly developed, do not succeed on account of propaganda. Of course there were thirty or forty makes of pianos using the other tuning arrangement and so the preponderance of evidence was against the new system. But after selling pianos for years out in remote places where tuners were not handy, I found this new system, if properly adjusted, to be the best system that was ever invented.

After having moved the big tree at Fort Madison and after having moved our first ^{home} on the hill because the earth had begun to slip off, we thought we had set our new home far enough back so that it would never be bothered by any slides. The Burlington Railroad had taken a steam shovel and had dug away the base of the hill after the keokuk dam was built instead of rip-rapping when they had plenty of ground on the river side of their track. The dam had made the Mississippi River into one large lake and the banks along the track washed continually. They let it go until the river had washed the banks up to the track. Then they thought that the easiest place for them to get dirt to fill in along the river side was to dig away the base of the hill. It would have cost the railroad no more to have rip-rapped the banks before they washed back to the track than it did now to dig away the base of the hill and fill in along the river side. This digging away the base of the hill started slides from the bottom. In the freezing and thawing and in the wet weather, the hill began to sluff off at the bottom and in time it sluffed clear to the top. One early morning thousands of tons of dirt slid off just as a passenger train came along and knocked the train into the river. Fortunately, the river was shallow enough so that no one was killed.

The railroad then began to dig away this dirt. I got hold of the assistant chief engineer, C. L. Persons, who was a very fine man and a very square man, to stop digging away the base of the

hill, I explained that that would simply let that much more dirt come down and eventually would come back and take the house. We drove steel sheet piling—some of it 45 feet long - and then we put dead men back 50 and 60 feet - dozens of them - and put angle irons and railroad irons in them. Then we attached copper-welded cables 7/8" thick to railroad irons outside the sheet steel piling at a great expense. But the freezing and thawing when the ground was wet caused the steel cables to break because of the tremendous hydraulic pressure built up.

One very dry year we had to dig down 30 feet and take out our front yard. We got approximately 1200 feet of three-foot corrugated culvert three-feet in diameter. We electric welded ends in them and made them from 10 to 40 feet long. Then we left about a foot between and tamped dry dirt around them and put in another 2000 feet of cables. We put in dead men that were 4 feet thick, 15 feet high, and 18 feet long. We doubled the amount of cables to them. We filled from 30 feet down in the ground to within 5 feet of the top of the ground with these corrugated culverts, with only 1 foot between of dry dirt. Then we put a roof of asphalt over this dry dirt and sloped it back toward the house so that no water would run over the hill. We put a six-inch layer of asphalt and then we put six inches of sand on that and led it down to a twelve-inch tile that was down in the ground about 8 or 9 feet and which drained back several hundred feet into a natural drain and slough that ran into the river. Then we put over 4 feet of dirt on top of this sand. This finally solved the problem.

We had no hydraulic pressure because the little corrugations on these three-foot pipes came next to one another and it kept the dry dirt from pressing out. The pressure was straight down. The ground never froze in there because there was 2/3 air down there which kept it from freezing. The asphalt roof kept it from getting wet, except the four feet on top. It has never moved a particle in the last five years since we did this. The railroad engineers and everyone else gave up and said it couldn't be done; but Paul Hunicke who was our maintenance man made the suggestion and the minute he made it, I saw that it was a capital idea.

Our front yard cost almost as much as our house. But the tree and yard and the grass are doing well. We have a little opening in there and the dirt is just as dry there in the wettest of weather as it was the day we tamped it in. We have turnbuckles on these cables now so that we can tighten them up if there is any stretching of the cables; but I believe as long as the sheet steel piling lasts - and we have covered it with good preservatives - that the front yard will hold.

If any of the future generations occupy this home and happen to see this record, we hope that they will keep up the preservation of the piling. This record is written so that they will understand what is in the ground and how to handle it.

In those frontier towns there was a great change as the country settled up. My father told me that in the early settlement of Bloomfield back in '54, there was only one well in the town which furnished living water. He said that the well was 90 feet deep and everyone had to go to this well to get their living water. He also said that you could fish in the little cricks at the edge of town, which are perfectly dry today. Out on the prairies in the cricks, there were little water holes in which there were plenty of sunfish; but today they have no water in them at all.

When they began to plow the ground, it made a great difference in the water supply. Instead of the water running off, it soaked into the ground a great deal; for now you can dig down almost any place 20 or 25 feet and get a good living well.

The records show that there isn't as much difference in the severity of the winters as it would seem. But when I was a young man, I saw it snow and blow until a crust would form so that when you rode in a sleigh with a team of horses over a stake and rider fence, the crust would be so hard that it would hold the team of horses up. The winters, it seemed to me, were much longer than they are now. At any rate, it wasn't unusual in the early days to have the snow stay on all winter. While we have just as heavy falls of snow now as we had then, the snow today does not seem to stay on and the winters seem to be more broken up with warm and cold days, instead of a steady cold as it was in years back. At any rate, in the last 20 years I have not seen a crust of snow on which you could drive a team of horses without breaking through.

April Fools Day in those times was quite a day. In the jewelry store we, of course, had soldering instruments. We would take a dime and solder a good-sized nail on one side of it and then drive it on the sidewalk in front of the store. As cement wasn't much in use those days, all the sidewalks were made of wood. As there was nothing visible to see but what it was just a dime lying there, it was very laughable to see the people come along and reach to pick it up only to find that it was fastened very tightly. Some would get angry and kick at it with their boots and, of course, scuff them. But it furnished a world of merriment for the people who were watching in the store.

My grandfather, a practical joker, was retired and came into the store every day. He was a very fine type of man; but like all practical jokers he enjoyed playing jokes on other people and not have jokes played on himself. S. S. Carruthers, an attorney, and I always planned to get a practical joke on him the first of April if we could, but we almost run out of things to do. In February there was a terrible blizzard and the papers were full of it, for it was one of the worst blizzards we had ever had. We saved this paper and preserved it in nice shape. When April 1 came, we pasted a little slip showing the date "April 1" over the February date of the newspaper. My grandfather came down to the store and picked up the paper and read what a terrible blizzard they had had in a certain part of the country. He called us all around and got everybody he could get to listen to him read the story of the blizzard aloud. After he read for quite awhile and looked up and saw us all laughing, he caught on. He said his by-word "Oh squint!" and threw the paper down and went home and stayed all the rest of the day.

It was the custom in those early days for shows to come and stay a week in a town, as the expense of travelling was considerable. In order to induce people to come to the show, Monday night would be "ladies free night." As my means were very limited, Monday night was the only night I could take my girl. I got the nickname for awhile of "ladies free night," but still I had to stick to "ladies free night" or stay home.

To show the difference between the customs of today and 50 years ago; when we had our dances 50 years ago, the dances began at eight o'clock and generally quit at midnight. It is hard for the younger generation to conceive of such a thing; but the reason for it was a very important one. Most of the people had work to do and had jobs and had to take care of those jobs to the best of their ability. So by commencing by eight o'clock - and generally only on Saturday nights - and quitting at twelve, they were enabled with the Sunday rest to tend to their jobs as well as ever.

But the ridiculous thing today is the way the young people do. Most of them who have a job go to a dance at ten o'clock and stay until the early hours of the morning, and then they are unfit for their

jobs the next day. There is no sense to it and no logical reason for it. It is just simply a bad custom, for they could get just as much enjoyment from eight to twelve as they could from ten to two or three in the morning and be in much better physical condition and be fair with their employers.

I remember a very funny thing that happened to a fine old fellow by the name of Jake Damuth. He made hoop holds to go around barrels and worked up quite a business and generally sold his hoop holds in Ottumwa, Iowa, which was about twenty miles away. One day he went over and collected \$1,900 for his sale of hoop holds. They counted him out the money and he went over to a little counter at one side away from the cashier's window and counted the money over several times. Finally he went back to the cashier's window and said to the person who had given him the money: "Do you correct mistakes here?" He was informed that after he left the window, there were no mistakes corrected. "Well," he said, "I just (he spoke broken English) wanted to know, for you gave me \$300 too much. As you don't correct mistakes, I will keep it. I thank you." And with that, he went out the door much to the chagrin of the paying teller.

Then there was old "Stormy" Jordan, who owned a fine saloon. In the early days he had a sign over his saloon which said: "The Road to Hell." It was a notorious place and was known all over southern Iowa. When anyone went in and asked for the best he had, he would invariably hand him out a glass of water. He was a peculiar character and pretty hardboiled, but he was strictly honest.

After moving to Fort Madison and out on the eight-acre place, I had a great deal to do. I employed Frank Rider, an old Bloomfield friend and bachelor, to build a fence for me. Frank had the habit of drinking a bit too much. When I came home in the evening, I saw that Frank was a little tipsy. I sighted down the fence and saw that it was about as crooked as a drunk man would walk. While I was looking down the fence, Frank looked up at me out of one corner of his eyes and said: "That fence isn't very straight but it is hellful stout." IT was stout enough, but it was so crooked we had to tear it down.

One of the most interesting things I ever did was inbreeding Light Brahma chickens. I found that by inbreeding and introducing new blood through the female that you could get the color and the size of the birds almost uniform. There is a prevalent opinion that inbreeding deteriorates the quality of the stock. That has come probably by the monarchies of Europe intermarrying. Where there is inbreeding and there is a deficiency on each side, of course that increases that deficiency; and that is what happened to the monarchies. But inbreeding in stock and chickens, if it is done by selection, you can increase the size and the vigor and the markings very materially because each one is selected for the purpose of increasing perfection. Seven of the finest and most uniform and best Light Brahmas I ever produced were from the mating of a brother and a sister. The seven chickens scored an average of up above 93 and were all uniform. When you think of quail, prairie chickens, and wild animals, the reason why they do not deteriorate is because only the strongest ones live and the weaker ones are weeded out, and they are very uniform; of course, there is inbreeding in the flocks of quails and wild birds of all kinds. Most breeders of cattle practice it, but they do not tell the people they are selling the stock to that they do because if they did, they wouldn't be able to sell their stock for improving other herds at so good an advantage.

In one of our different trips on the Sheridan River fishing, we had many things come up. As I was very near-sighted and had to wear my glasses at all times, even when I was swimming in the river, I was practically helpless without them. When I went down to dive one time, I came up without my glasses and we couldn't find them. I had to go back to camp and sit on a log and not participate in the fishing, etc. until I could get another pair. This other pair was 20 miles away and most of my time that year was spent waiting for the glasses. From that day until this - and that is probably 40 years - I have never gone without an extra pair of glasses in my pocket, and it has come in handy many a time.

It was always my duty when we were seining to go behind the seine. You had to have a good diver and a pretty good swimmer. Those were the days when we had hooks in front of our shoes instead of eyelets so you could lace and unlace a shoe very quick. They got the seine snagged in a very deep hole and I went down to un snag it; it was snagged on a big tree. The hooks on one of my shoes caught on the seine; and when I would pull one hook off the seine, the other hooks would catch. I stayed under almost too long trying to get my foot free; finally, I took off my shoe and came to the top. When we finally got the seine loose and pulled it up, the shoe was still sticking to the seine. This was a pretty close call, but it didn't stop the seining or the diving.